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The Image of the Artist as a Young Man
in the First Three Novels of D. H. Lawrence

by

Gëzim Ismaili

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23 JAN 1998

Abstract

Scholars agree that from the first D. H. Lawrence showed considerable interest in portraits of the artist, but do not see the theme as being pivotal in his *oeuvre*, particularly during the 1906-1913 period. The main reason for this has been the tendency to read Lawrence's early work largely as an attempt to turn his life into art, thus ignoring somehow that he was highlighting the theme of the identity of the artist.

Part One (Chapter Two) in this study traces Lawrence's early tensions, troubles, concerns, dilemmas, interests and ambitions to show how they forecast his imminent attention to the artist theme. Part Two presents a detailed analysis of how the image of the artist as a young man emerges and evolves in each of Lawrence's first three novels.

Without ignoring or underestimating the individuality of each of Lawrence's early major artists - Cyril Beardsall, Siegmund MacNair and Paul Morel - the emphasis on these figures in Chapters Three, Four and Five in this thesis is not so much on their differences as on what binds these artistic protagonists together.

The dominant theme in The White Peacock is that of the artist's alienation and eventual self-exile from his native landscape. The artist's relationship with women, which is tackled only tangentially in the first novel, becomes the dominant theme in The Trespasser. Siegmund's search as an artist for spiritual and sexual fulfilment is picked up by Paul in Sons and Lovers. Unlike his artistic predecessors, Paul finally succeeds in getting what he wants from separate women, although this artist too fails to find both soul and passion in one and the same woman. Moreover, like Cyril and Siegmund, Paul is surrounded by possessive women who fail to understand, and hence are unable to accept, that the man and the artist in him are inseparable.

This study reveals the long and relentless quest of Lawrence's early major artist-figures for self-awareness, self-fulfilment and freedom. It also assesses Lawrence's contribution to the artist theme in twentieth-century English literature.

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This thesis is the result of my own work and includes no material previously submitted for a degree in this or any other university.

Signed: Gezim Ismaili

Date: 13th November 1997

The copyright of this thesis rests with the author. No quotation from it should be permitted without his prior consent and information derived from it should be acknowledged.

Preface

Part of the material of Chapter Three has been included in the paper "Landscape and Exile in The White Peacock", which I presented at the Sixth International D. H. Lawrence Conference in Nottingham on 15 July 1996; the paper will be published in the coming issue of D. H. Lawrence Studies. Material from Chapter Five is substantially reproduced in the article entitled "Paul Morel and His 'Rival' Brother", which I am currently preparing for publication in Etudes Lawrenciennes.

I am very grateful to the Postgraduate Committee of the Department of English Studies for upgrading me from an MA student to a Ph.D. student in March 1994. I am primarily indebted to my supervisors, Professor J. R. Watson and Dr. Margaret Masson, for their stimulating guidance throughout the preparation of this thesis. Their scholarship, critical insight, advice, and constant encouragement have been especially valued. I alone remain responsible for the views, weakness or faults in this thesis.

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My largest debt, for her constant devotion, understanding, interest, encouragement and practical help, is to my wife Dashuri. To her and to my daughter Geila I dedicate this thesis.

Abbreviations

<u>Tr</u>	<u>The Trespasser</u> (1912; ed. Elizabeth Mansfield, Cambridge, 1981).
<u>SL</u>	<u>Sons and Lovers</u> (1913; eds. Helen Baron and Carl Baron, Cambridge, 1992).
<u>STH</u>	<u>Study of Thomas Hardy and Other Essays</u> (1936; ed. Bruce Steele, Cambridge, 1985).
<u>WP</u>	<u>The White Peacock</u> (1911; ed. Andrew Robertson, Cambridge, 1983).

PART ONE

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

D. H. Lawrence's interest in the artist has been widely acknowledged, particularly in the last twenty years,¹ and yet the more precise nature of this theme as well as its importance in his work as a whole have been largely ignored. The artist is one of Lawrence's most typical figures. Nearly all of Lawrence's writings of every kind - poetry, drama, letter-writing - have something to say about the artist, but the character is a particularly familiar figure in Lawrence's fiction. The artistic hero's presence is apparent in many of Lawrence's stories and in all of his novels.

The figure of the artist emerges for the first time in Lawrence's creative writing in 1906 in the initial version of his first novel The White Peacock. From then onwards the artist became a frequent device in Lawrence's *oeuvre* right up until the end of his life in 1930. Although Lawrence's interest in the artist spans twenty-four years, the attention he pays to this protagonist, and his handling of the artist theme vary from novel to novel and from one stage in his writing career to another.

So far not enough research has been carried out into the reasons for Lawrence's lifelong interest in the artist, and the way in which the artist theme evolves in Lawrence's fiction is an area yet to be explored. The present thesis hopes to offer some contribution to Lawrence scholarship by tracing the main stages that the artist theme goes through in Lawrence's work, and by presenting for the first time a detailed analysis of the image of the artist as a young man in Lawrence's early fiction. Attention will be paid to Lawrence's writing in various genres from 1906 to 1913, but the works which form the central subject of this study are The White Peacock (1911), The Trespasser (1912), and Sons and Lovers (1913). These three novels constitute the 'genesis' stage of the artist theme in Lawrence's fiction.

Lawrence's preoccupation with the artist theme is apparent also in what he wrote and published immediately after 1913, particularly in The Rainbow (1915), and in its sequel Women in Love (1920). Yet the artist characters emerging in the years 1914-1920 are not main protagonists like their literary predecessors, Cyril Beardsall, Siegmund MacNair, and Paul Morel. Marriage, rather than the artist theme, claims Lawrence's attention in the fiction he wrote from 1914-1919.

The artist re-emerges as a principal figure in Lawrence's fiction of the years 1920-1923, particularly in Mr Noon (written between 1920-22, but published posthumously), Aaron's Rod (1922), and Kangaroo (1923). In spite of their differences, the artist figures in these three novels - Gilbert Noon, Aaron Sisson, R. L. Somers - have one essential thing in common: they are the first Lawrentian artists to leave England 'to flower' elsewhere. The exile motif is central in the novels of the 1920-1923 period which constitute the second stage of Lawrence's interest in the artist theme.

The study of Lawrence's handling of the image of the artist in the years 1906-1913 is important for several reasons. Firstly, it throws light on the motives that made Lawrence pay so much attention from the start to the artist as a protagonist. Secondly, it allows the reader to see how Lawrence's handling of the artist theme differs, evolves, and matures in the second stage of his career.

Moreover, the study of the image of the artist in Lawrence's fiction of 1906-1913 is important not only with reference to what he wrote thereafter, but also because of his contribution to the image of the artist in English literature in general. Lawrence was not the first English novelist to write about the artist. The artist figure had been frequently present in English literature, particularly in the late nineteenth century in the works of writers and aesthetes like Oscar Wilde and Walter Pater.

But from the start Lawrence's interest in as well as his handling of the artist figure differed considerably from those of his nineteenth-century predecessors. With Lawrence, the artist theme did not simply re-emerge in twentieth-century English literature; it was rather 'reinvented'. This thesis proposes that in the work of Lawrence

the figure of the artist found an attention, a place, and a kind of treatment which were new at the beginning of the century.

The exploration of a web of factors closely related to his background, his personality, and the time he lived in, uncovers the roots of Lawrence's initial and lifelong attachment to the character of the artist. This is the subject of Chapter Two of the thesis. Although Lawrence's biography is well known, part of the second chapter reassesses some aspects of Lawrence's life. I take particular interest in Lawrence's early years - 1885-1913 - but not simply for biographical reasons. It is not my intention to rewrite this crucial formative period of Lawrence's life which has been so admirably recorded for years by many scholars, and most recently by John Worthen and Mark Kinkead-Weekes. Attention will be focused, however, on some moments in Lawrence's infancy, childhood, boyhood, and youth which have been mentioned only in passing in the existing biographies of Lawrence because evidence about them is relatively scarce. While I am cautious not to be over-speculative, I reassess the little evidence available about such early biographical moments to see how they affected Lawrence, and how indicative they are of the would-be writer's earliest interest in the artist figure. So for instance, attention will be paid particularly to the Lydia-Ernest relationship up to 1901, and the impact this strong mother-son attachment had on David Herbert throughout the first fifteen years of his life. Lawrence's good relation with his 'rival' brother Ernest is another interesting aspect of Lawrence's early years. Ernest's attachment to Lydia may have well caused Lawrence much anxiety, but the elder brother also played a very positive role in Lawrence's early development, particularly in what David Herbert read from 1889-1902. Similarly, this study attempts for the first time to assess the nature and the importance of Lawrence's 1902 correspondence with the Chambers family in the wake of his 1901 attack of pneumonia. Lawrence's confessing of himself in the letters of this period is the earliest indication as yet of the kind of writing he would do thereafter.

Lawrence's early reading, particularly during the years 1902-1904, is worth investigating because it reveals that rather early in his life he was not simply a great

reader but also a very selective one. From 1902 onward Lawrence would read with a purpose. His comments on what he read in his early life indicate that his 'hunting among books'² as from 1902 was motivated by the intention of finding in them both 'something about himself'³ and the kind of technique and method he would employ for his own writing. The interest Lawrence showed in the diary from 1905 to 1906 is yet another aspect of his long quest before embarking on his own creative writing.

The remainder of Chapter Two in the present study discusses an essential aspect of Lawrence's writing - 'laying bare' his soul - and how anxious Lawrence was about his confession not only when he first put pen to paper but also throughout the 1906-1913 period. The courage, resilience, and determination Lawrence as a 'deeply personal' writer⁴ displayed during these years are also tackled here.

The 'personal' aspect of his writing has led some critics - mostly feminists and psychoanalysts - to overemphasise the autobiographical element in what Lawrence wrote in general and particularly in his first three novels. Occasionally, simplistic parallels have been drawn between Lawrence the man and his artistic *alter egos*. The trend was initiated by some of Lawrence's contemporaries, such as John Middleton Murry and Jessie Chambers Wood, who in the 1930s approached some of his early characters as replicas of the author. One of the aims in Chapter II and in the thesis as a whole is to show that, although from the first Lawrence employed his writing to confess 'bits of himself',⁵ his work is not his autobiography, and the artist figures he wrote about are not himself.

Referring to the psychological novel in general, Sigmund Freud postulated in his article 'Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming' in 1908 that the genre 'owes its special nature to the inclination of the modern writer to split up his ego, by self-observation, into part-egos, and, in consequence, to personify the conflicting currents of his own mental life in several heroes'.⁶ Lawrence became acquainted with Freud's theories four years later. Yet what he wrote from 1906 to 1912 indicates that from the start the study of himself was one of his priorities. Likewise, the works of this period reveal that from the first Lawrence began to conduct that study very much as a modern writer.

The affinity Lawrence's writing has with the psychological novel - liberating the unconscious - has often tempted scholars to see Lawrence's tendency to split up his ego into part-egos as something he was forced to do so that he could know and come to terms better with his serious psychic difficulties. True, his own problems made for an important source of his art; they were among the pressures which sparked his writing and provided his topics. All the same, they do not make him a 'case'.⁷ As Michael Bell puts it, Lawrence's notion of shedding 'sickness' in art⁸ was 'an exploratory rather than a merely symptomatic conception'.⁹

Lawrence succeeded in remaining impersonal even when writing about his own life-experiences because, more than in his 'small, personal' self, he was interested in depicting what he thought was more essential not simply about himself but of what he thought he stood for. Lawrence believed strongly in the universal appeal and the moral importance of what he was doing. 'I write,' he declared in 1913, 'because I want folk - English folk - to alter, and have more sense.'¹⁰ Very early in his life Lawrence was confident that he was an artist at heart, and it was this 'artistic' self that was 'strong, and glad, and ultimately sure, but so blind, so groping, so tongue-tied, so staggering',¹¹ that he wanted to write about from the first. The study of this early, personal, and lifelong interest he took in the image of the artist is crucial to assessing, and acknowledging the significant, pivotal, and as yet not fully recognised contribution Lawrence made to the literature's notion of what an artist is, and what it means to be an artist in the twentieth century.

Part Two in this study examines Lawrence's handling of the artist theme in The White Peacock, The Trespasser, and Sons and Lovers. A chapter is devoted to the major artistic protagonist in each of these novels. The third chapter focuses on Cyril Beardsall. Cyril marks the emergence of the artist figure in Lawrence's *oeuvre* as well as the author's lifelong interest in artistic heroes. A thorough study of this pioneering artistic figure is a necessary step to approach the artist theme in Lawrence's work as a whole.

Cyril is not only Lawrence's first major artist but also one of his most interesting artistic figures. Nevertheless, Cyril's artistic nature remains to this day one of the least studied aspects of this character. In most cases critics pay attention to Cyril mainly as a narrator, thus ignoring somehow that he is not only one of the main characters but also *the* principal one. George and Lettie are very important protagonists but The White Peacock is not essentially about them. One of the book's main subjects is Cyril's quest for artistic detachment. Cyril's attachment to his mother and sister, his close ties with his native valley and friends there are examined in Chapter Three of the present study with the intention of explaining why it took this artist such a long time to leave them. Cyril's relationship with the city, as well as his frequent visits to Nethermere, throw more light on the achievements and the weak points of Lawrence's handling of the exile theme in his first novel.

Chapter Three also examines the nature of Cyril's relationship with his girlfriend Emily, as well as his views on women and marriage as a whole. Studying Lawrence's handling of such issues in this novel is important to assess how his treatment of the artist's relationship with women changes, broadens, and matures gradually in the novels that followed The White Peacock, particularly in The Trespasser.

In the fourth chapter of the thesis the emphasis is on the complex relationship of the musician Siegmund MacNair with his wife Beatrice, and his student-love Helena Verden. One of the main aims of this chapter is to show that Siegmund's interest in women is not that of a Don Juan but of an artist. He views his relation with Helena as essential to his *artistic being*. It is with Siegmund that Lawrence voices for the first time all his artists' need 'to be kept' by women.

The study of what Helena shares with Emily Saxton and what sets these two female characters apart is also one of the priorities in Chapter Four. So far it has been taken for granted that Lettie, not Emily, is the direct predecessor of Helena. By comparing and contrasting Cyril's and Siegmund's girlfriends I intend to trace the emergence and the evolution of Lawrence's concept of the 'dreaming woman' whom the artistic figures in the first two novels need and shun.

Thus far, the general belief has been that the attribute 'dreaming woman' describes best the essence of the Helena character. The fact of the matter, however, is that Helena is a much more complex figure than just a 'dreaming' woman. Her inclination to be both spiritual and physical is one of the main reasons for the great interest Siegmund takes in her. Her inability to balance the spiritual with the physical, as well as her possessive nature, are examined in detail in Chapter Four because of their impact on her relationship with Siegmund, and on the violinist's eventual decision to take his own life.

Lawrence's ability to transform the tragic love story of his Croydon colleague and friend Helen Corke into a work of fiction, which was by coincidence thematically related to his first novel, is the subject of the fourth chapter of this study. My intention is to elucidate further Lawrence's dexterity in employing both his own life-experiences as well as the experiences of other people to elaborate the image of the artist as a young man throughout the first stage of his writing. Sons and Lovers marks yet another crucial development in Lawrence's handling of the same theme, and also another achievement in transforming details from his own life experience into art.

Paul Morel's quest for artistic self-fulfilment and freedom is the subject of the fifth chapter of this thesis. The analysis of the book in general and of Paul as an artist in particular is based on material that has only recently become available: the 1992 Cambridge edition includes for the first time the one-tenth of the novel cut by Edward Garnett prior to the 1913 Duckworth edition. Without ignoring or underestimating the interesting conclusions about the book by scholars of various literary trends - Freudian, autobiographical, vitalist, feminist - I view the novel first and foremost as a work of fiction about the portrait of a young artist.

Paul's artistic nature has not passed unnoticed up until now, yet the fact that he is an artist demands more attention. Nor has the breakthrough which Sons and Lovers marked in Lawrence's handling of the artist theme always been assessed objectively. Nor has Lawrence's remarkable achievement in the treatment of the artist theme been fully assessed. Sons and Lovers offers probably the most interesting portrait of a

Lawrentian artist. It is only with Paul Morel that the artist theme comes fully into being in Lawrence's fiction.

One of the reasons why Paul's artistic portrait stands out from that of Cyril and Siegmund is because in his third novel Lawrence chooses to include all stages in the development of the artist's life. Cyril and Siegmund are nineteen and thirty-eight respectively at the beginning of The White Peacock and The Trespasser; Paul Morel is a child when he emerges as a 'character' at the outset of Sons and Lovers.

In the early sections of Chapter Five I pay particular attention to Lawrence's innovative implementation of the best that was written on children throughout the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, and in particular of Dickens's psychological approach to childhood. While I acknowledge what Paul Morel the child shares with David Copperfield and Paul Dombey, I also stress that Lawrence's Paul is also a unique literary child in English literature. Lawrence pays unprecedented attention to Paul's infancy and childhood to trace in them the gestation of the artist's soul; an interest which by the beginning of the twentieth century was shared only by James Joyce, particularly from 1904 to 1914, when he was engaged in writing A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.

Paul Morel's early tensions result mainly from his desperate attempts to attract Mrs Morel's attention. As long as William is alive, none of her other children, least of all the frequently sick Paul, is considered by Gertrude as one who is likely to excel. The impact of Mrs Morel's failure to notice as well as her reluctance to acknowledge Paul's unique potential as a successful clerk, but also as a promising artist are examined at length in the fifth chapter of this study. On the other hand, the chapter also views Paul's childhood tensions as useful stimulus for the would-be artist; they heighten his sensitivity to people, nature and language.

Paul is Lawrence's first young man who is fully aware of his artistic potential. This exceptional self-awareness explains largely why he is so cautious with women such as the predominantly spiritual Miriam and the mainly sexual Clara. The impact these contrasting types of women have on Paul as well as the reasons why he needs them are

some other issues I address at length in Chapter Five. I also examine the extent to which Lawrence succeeds and fails in his depiction of such one-sided characters as Miriam and Clara.

By the end of the fifth chapter attention is focused on the credibility of Paul's final decisions 'to abandon' the three women he loves and resents - Gertrude, Miriam, Clara - and to choose the lights of the city instead of darkness and death. Paul's final decisions are compared and contrasted with those of Cyril and Siegmund, but not to show who is right and who wrong. One of the interesting things about Lawrence's handling of the artistic heroes of the 1906-1913 period is that they all appear to be independent-minded and fully responsible for their actions. The link I make between the successes and failures of Cyril, Siegmund, and Paul aims at tracing how each of these characters learns from his predecessors, and paves the way for the emergence of other artists. It is my belief that Sons and Lovers could never have been written had Lawrence not experimented earlier with the artist theme in The White Peacock and The Trespasser. I hope to offer a more comprehensive picture not only of the three first major artistic figures but also of the evolution of Lawrence's image of the artist as a young man during the most formative years of his early life as a man and artist.

NOTES: CHAPTER ONE

1. For recent treatment of Lawrence's interest in the artist theme, particularly in Sons and Lovers, see Colin Milton, Lawrence and Nietzsche: A Study in Influence (Aberdeen: Aberdeen UP, 1987), pp. 95, 126, 140, 143, 184, 221. (Hereafter cited as Lawrence and Nietzsche); John Worthen, D. H. Lawrence: The Early Years: 1885-1912 (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 145-51. (Hereafter cited as Early Years).
2. Jessie Chambers, D. H. Lawrence: A Personal Record (London: Cape, 1935; Cambridge, 1980), p. 93. (Hereafter cited as Personal Record).
3. Ibid., p. 95.
4. Letter to Edward Garnett, 21 January 1912, in The Letters of D. H. Lawrence, Volume 1, September 1901 - May 1913, ed. James T. Boulton (Cambridge, 1979), pp. 353-4 (p. 353). (Hereafter cited as Letters, i).
5. Personal Record, p. 91.
6. Sigmund Freud, 'Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming', in The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, trans. James Strachey, et. al. 1959 ed. 24 vols. (London: Hogarth, 1955-74), 9:144-51 (p. 150).
7. Michael Black is one of the present-day Lawrentians who does not see Lawrence's fictionalising of his own life as an indication of his attempts to know and to come to terms with his 'abnormal' nature (see Michael Black, D. H. Lawrence: The Early Philosophical Works: A Commentary (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 1-6. (Hereafter cited as Philosophical Works)).
8. Letter to Arthur McLeod, [26 October 1913], in The Letters of D. H. Lawrence, Volume 2, June 1913 - October 1916, eds. George J. Zytaruk and James T. Boulton (Cambridge, 1981), pp. 89-91 (p. 90). (Hereafter cited as Letters, ii).
9. Michael Bell, D. H. Lawrence: Language and Being, (1991; Cambridge, 1995), p. 13. (Hereafter cited as Language and Being).
10. Letter to Arthur McLeod, [23 April 1913], in Letters, i, pp. 543-5 (p. 544).
11. Letter to Gordon Campbell, [3? March 1915], in Letters, ii, pp. 300-3 (p. 302).

CHAPTER TWO

THE MAKING OF A WRITER

1. D. H. LAWRENCE'S 1902 CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE CHAMBERS FAMILY

Lawrence confessed on 4 May 1908 that he began to write for the first time 'when my boyhood....began to drop from me'.¹ Jessie Chambers, his first literary confidante, would recall in 1935: 'It was during the year when he was an uncertificated teacher in the British School at Eastwood [August 1905 to September 1906] that Lawrence first spoke to me about writing.'² Lawrence himself admitted during the same meeting with her that he had thought about writing even before, but at that stage he did not elaborate.³ In May 1908, referring to 'Laetitia', Lawrence told a friend that it was in the University that 'I began to write a novel - or rather, I resumed a work I had begun some months before - two years last Easter'.⁴ Almost three years later Lawrence wrote: 'I was very young when I wrote the Peacock - I began it at twenty.'⁵ And in 1928 he would recall that the novel's first 'bits and patches' were written at the 'age of 19'.⁶

Obviously it is difficult to say when exactly Lawrence started writing The White Peacock: 1904, 1905, or 1906. Lawrence's inconsistency about the exact date, however, reveals what to writers is axiomatic: for an artist a work often germinates in the mind much earlier than the moment when it first materialises. What is both indisputable and strange is that Lawrence started writing a novel when he was barely twenty, at a stage when he had hardly written a line, and had published virtually nothing. The history of literature does not know many cases of writers who 'break the ice' with a novel.⁷

But Lawrence started 'writing' even earlier than the year 1904. By the beginning of 1902 he sent to the Chambers family what were probably the first epistles he ever wrote. Those letters were composed during the long convalescence following his

severe pneumonia of 1901. In Jessie's words, that was the time when the sick sixteen-year-old Lawrence 'made a habit of writing long letters to us, sometimes several in a week....They were accounts of what he had been doing or reading, bits of himself put down on paper, often very amusingly'.⁸

Unfortunately, these letters, which could have been of inestimable value in tracing Lawrence's own confessional accounts of his 'bits of himself' when he first thought of writing, have not survived. Nevertheless, the time when Lawrence started writing his first letters, as well as the reasons why he chose to correspond with the Chambers family, are worth exploring because of the light they throw both on Lawrence's emotional state of mind, and his relation with his own household, mainly his mother, at that particular moment in his life.

Lawrence's first visit to the Haggs few months before he fell ill proved to be a fateful event. From the start Lawrence realised that the Chambers family were different from his household. He liked the farmers enormously from the beginning. Among them he discovered a different atmosphere from what he was used to in his home as well as a new kind of life. As George Neville put it, at the Haggs the order of Lawrence's home was 'entirely reversed'.⁹ Jessie's father was for the Chambers family what the mother was for the Lawrences. The difference between Edmund Chambers and Lydia Lawrence, however, consisted in the fact that, unlike her, there was 'nothing of a tyrant' about him, 'and he was certainly well beloved by the whole of his household'.¹⁰

Another important reason why Lawrence became rapidly attached to the Chambers family was the intense desire with which they all read and discussed literature. Lawrence was impressed particularly by the recreational effect and friendly atmosphere of those literary talks. Although the parents and their children did not necessarily agree all the time with what everybody said, still - unlike Lawrence's mother - none of them tried to impose his or her own opinion or judgement upon the others.

Moreover, the Chambers family was bound to attract Lawrence more than anyone else he had known until then because the Haggs offered him the first chance to talk to people who listened to him sympathetically, accepted him as their equal in games, and

started to acknowledge even his uniqueness. It was from the start of his visits to their farm that, as Lawrence would acknowledge 'whimsically' few years later: 'Ah, you Haggites' - his term of endearment for the Chambers family - 'see the best of me!'¹¹

For Lawrence, going to the Haggs marked the beginning of his happy boyhood. Jessie recalled that 'Lawrence was loath to admit that boyhood was over....Lawrence found the present so good, he wanted it to last'.¹² Considering the memorable times he had with the Chambers family, it was not surprising that Lawrence was so keen to prolong his boyhood. 'It is never too late to have a happy childhood,' notes John Worthen, 'and Lawrence discovered his at the Haggs.'¹³

The pneumonia of 1901 could not have occurred at a more unfortunate time for Lawrence. Because of it he was severed reluctantly from his newly-discovered sympathetic audience. The inner urge to retain his links with it made Lawrence resort to letter-writing, probably for the first time in his life. Through his letters Lawrence kept the Chambers family informed about whatever he read during those months he was unable to visit them. Yet his intention in embarking on the correspondence went beyond listing the titles of the books he read. If that was the case, he hardly needed to write to Jessie's family 'several' times a week.¹⁴ Lawrence employed the letters as a means of sharing with them the great pleasure he was deriving from what he read. The fact that the letters were 'long'¹⁵ implies that he wrote at length about several literary works. The correspondence was Lawrence's first - though still mainly unconscious - attempt to express his critical thought in writing.

Sensitive and introvert as he was at sixteen, Lawrence would not have written to the Chambers family so openly about what he read if prior to the pneumonia he had not enjoyed with them some stimulating literary discussions. According to Jessie, Lawrence's letters of 1902 'were addressed sometimes to one, sometimes to another, occasionally to the family as a whole - "Dear Haggites"'.¹⁶ Although recently acquainted, Lawrence and the Chambers family loved and missed one another. And now that he was unable to visit them, it was through his letters that they still 'looked to Lawrence for most of our entertainment'.¹⁷

However, from the beginning of that friendship, one member of the Chambers family in particular was of a special interest to Lawrence. Very early he discerned in Jessie some kind of a kindred spirit. Like him, she was 'an exceptionally sensitive and gifted child',¹⁸ unhappy most of the time, and at odds with herself and with the people who failed to appreciate her. Lawrence and Jessie were also almost of the same age. It was because of what both he and she had in common that, to quote his sister Ada, Jessie 'claimed him before all others',¹⁹ although at first Jessie failed to see Lawrence's initial covert interest in her. Referring to the 1902 correspondence, Jessie recalled how 'by imperceptible degrees...his letters came to be addressed chiefly to me'.²⁰ Thinking that he 'intended' his letters 'for the family as a whole' she told Lawrence: 'Of course, I always pass your letters round for everybody to read.' Only after his remark 'You needn't pass on *all* my letters for everybody to read' she realised for 'the first time - although not very clearly - that he had chosen her among her household as the only person to whom he could tell about himself what he would not like other people to know.

From 1902 onwards Jessie would play an important role in young Lawrence's life. Jessie's lasting contribution in the making of Lawrence the artist is linked with her attitude towards his sensitivity. With her willingness to listen to what he had to say, and her unfailing sympathy for what he wrote, Jessie was the first person to realise that Lawrence's sensitiveness was that of an artist, and that he could express, develop, and make the best use of it only through constant writing. Likewise, Jessie was the first to see that, to Lawrence, writing was 'the work he was urged to do from within'.²¹ She had the merit to be the first to discover the initial deeply personal motive of Lawrence's writing, and his efforts to realise through it 'a bursting of the tension'.²²

Obviously, by 1902 Lawrence could not have realised all these things in Jessie. However, the fact that he selected her as the only person to whom he could confide what he had never told before to anyone else gives credit to his ability to detect in his first would-be reader and critic some qualities he had not seen in his mother or other people.

Lawrence's temptation to confess himself in the 1902 letters was the earliest sign that in essence his writing was deeply personal from the first. Likewise, his concern to reduce his readership to a minimum signified that for him the process of laying bare his soul would be far from an easy task. He dreaded the 'humiliation' such a confession would encompass. However, the fact that he did not terminate the correspondence throughout his convalescence showed that he was determined to pursue what he was doing. It would be too much to claim that those early letters made him conscious of his potential as a would-be writer. Yet it was through them that he started to know, to study, and to confess 'bits of himself',²³ and of other people around him.

The 1902 correspondence commenced also what would become one of Lawrence's lifetime habits. It was since 1902 that he began to realise for the first time that, as he put it in 1908, 'I go easily onto paper - there is quite a lot of *me* in a letter'.²⁴ The large number of Lawrence's published letters in the seven volumes of the Cambridge edition - 5,500 - reveals, among other things, the constant strong need he felt to confess himself both to himself and to other people. Letter-writing offered Lawrence the opportunity to be intimate. In his letters he recorded with integrity his troubles and growth at every moment in his life. His correspondence is of an inestimable value in understanding his writing as a whole. It unveils in particular the ordeals he went through from 1901 to 1913 when he was increasingly preoccupied with getting to know his different selves, a preoccupation which led inevitably to the gradual fictionalisation of some of his life-experiences. In this context, his letters do not constitute a subsidiary but an essential part of Lawrence's literary output. They are particularly helpful in tracing how Lawrence's interest in the artist theme emerges, evolves, and matures throughout the years he was engaged in writing The White Peacock, The Trespasser, and Sons and Lovers.

2. LAWRENCE'S INTEREST IN THE DIARY IN 1906

Except for the 1902 letters to the Chambers family, Lawrence hardly wrote anything worth mentioning up to 1906. Yet his cards and letters of this interval reveal that, although not a very clear aim, writing was still in his mind. This early correspondence is the first indication of his initial attempts to write. What recipients liked most in his letters and cards were both the ability to describe what he saw, and his power 'to convey the full flavour of his palpitating excitement'.²⁵

Lawrence started writing his first essays when he was a pupil teacher and an uncertificated teacher from Autumn 1902 to September 1906. None of them has survived. According to Jessie, 'His essays were read out as patterns to the class, and I remember the quiet pride of his smile when he told me'.²⁶ One can hardly consider those early essays as serious literary efforts; as a pupil he was asked rather than chose to write them. Yet their appreciation by his teachers and fellow students seemed to have been encouraging. Apparently, his pride was linked not only with the fact of being the best pupil in his class, but also with the growing confidence of having the capacity to express himself in writing.

Like the 1902 correspondence, the essays Lawrence wrote up to 1906 can hardly be considered as launching his creative writing. For the first time Lawrence would profess his intention to write fiction shortly before Easter 1906. Jessie recalled that during that eventful conversation Lawrence suggested: 'Lots of the things we say, the things you say, would go ever so well into a book'.²⁷ This suggests that Lawrence saw himself from the start as a would-be 'deeply personal' writer.²⁸

It was not accidental that almost at the same time as he confided to Jessie his intention to write, Lawrence showed a great deal of interest in the diary as a form of self-expression. He was searching for a quite common pattern of confessional writing that would give him the chance to express himself as intimately as possible.

Lawrence suggested to Jessie that she should keep a diary in French in 1906. He had started giving her French lessons earlier than 1905, and in general was not pleased with her progress. Yet his latest idea concerning keeping a diary does not seem to have

been motivated simply by the fact that, to quote Jessie, 'Our French reading still went on in a desultory fashion'.²⁹ But it was not purely a pedagogical proposal, nor was it a passing whim. Lawrence 'insisted'³⁰ on her keeping a diary. Moreover, the notes he was expecting from her were to reflect not what she did, but what she thought: 'I was to put down my *thoughts* (he was emphatic about that).'³¹

Lawrence expected to learn many things by Jessie's intimation of her own thoughts. Firstly, her diary would serve him as a means of knowing more about Jessie through her own written confession. By that time, what Jessie called 'the conflict' in their relationship, had already begun, and he had told her 'blatantly: 'You're not the complement of me, you don't *complement* me in any way.' Her notes would help him to learn: 'Do you think you do?'³²

Secondly, her diary would assist Lawrence to know more about himself. Jessie was puzzled when once in reply to some entry of her diary 'he wrote across the page "*Quant à moi, je suis grand animal.*" I demurred, but he insisted, nodding emphatically, "Yes, yes, I *am.*"'³³ That he expected her to write either directly or indirectly, even about him, is also possible. Her notes would assist him to understand to what extent he had to blame himself for the deterioration of their relationship. Self-critical and with a highly developed sense of justice, even then Lawrence did not hold Jessie totally responsible for what was going wrong between them.

Thirdly, Lawrence wanted to make use of Jessie's diary as an authentic document written by someone he knew, trusted, appreciated, and opposed, as a means through which he could learn more about this prototype of a dreaming woman. Had her notes survived, they could have been of particular interest to trace in them the likes of Miriam Leivers. Jessie's diary was the 'raw material' Lawrence needed to create what he would call later the literary 'spiritual witches' that the artists in his first three novels need and shun. Paul Morel asks Miriam in Sons and Lovers to write a weekly diary in French in the hope that he would learn more about the 'inner life' (SL 246) of the woman who stimulates and frustrates him.

Fourthly, it could be argued that Lawrence conceived the idea of her keeping a diary as a trick to encourage Jessie to do her own creative writing. From the first Lawrence was impressed by Jessie's constant 'longing for beauty',³⁴ her romantic make-up,³⁵ as well as by the fact that, of all her 'book-loving household',³⁶ '[she] was the most deeply stirred by what she read'.³⁷ Such early observations led Lawrence to believe that one day, because of how much she read, she too would end up writing. In 1905 he would envisage more clearly than before that that would be the natural end of their joint intensive reading: 'Getting near to our own day,' he said to her 'significantly'.³⁸ From the first moment when they talked about writing Lawrence saw her very much as a partner in the process: 'I'm sure we could do something if we tried.'³⁹ After all, Jessie herself told Lawrence she had thought about writing 'all my life'.⁴⁰ Jessie recalled that when he began to talk definitely of writing a novel, Lawrence 'wanted me to try to write one too, so that we could compare notes'.⁴¹ Apparently, Lawrence did not want Jessie to write only to compare notes. He believed that someone in her position who had 'a *wonderful* sympathy',⁴² was so much attached to nature,⁴³ and had read 'all the best literature, and the finest poetry in the world....ought to write'.⁴⁴ It was through her diary that Lawrence hoped to make 'communicable' a potential artist who lacked self-confidence, and was reluctant to commit herself to writing.

Fifthly, in proposing that Jessie and he should keep a diary, Lawrence was aiming at pushing not only her but also himself to write. By that time Lawrence was twenty, and he could not have been at ease seeing that at that age he had not yet completed writing a single work, and had sent to print absolutely nothing.

Finally, Jessie's diary would offer Lawrence a chance to investigate the technique of writing itself. Knowing its advantages and disadvantages beforehand would be easier for him to consider it as an option for his own writing. This was probably the main reason why Lawrence suggested to Jessie in 1906 that 'we should each keep a diary'.⁴⁵

Although Jessie's recollection of the keen interest Lawrence took in her diary in 1906 remained vivid even after three decades, she was unable to say whether or no

Lawrence ever started keeping his own diary by that time. She herself 'never saw his'.⁴⁶ But she had already seen its equivalent during 1902 in his long letters to her and to her family. Those first 'accounts' and 'bits of himself'⁴⁷ were the first 'entries' of his diary.

But even during 1906 Lawrence was keeping a real diary. It is surprising, though, that only one single page of it has survived. This entry dated '*Wednesday*. August 9, 1906',⁴⁸ to quote G. S. Gelder, 'is the earliest piece of work by him [i.e. Lawrence] that has not been destroyed'.⁴⁹ Lawrence wrote the notes while holidaying with his family at Mablethorpe.

Strangely enough, although Jessie accompanied the Lawrences to the seaside resort, she knew nothing about Lawrence's diary. Perhaps he started keeping such notes after her departure; Jessie stayed at Mablethorpe only one week.⁵⁰ On the other hand, considering what George Neville called, 'that sentimental side of himself that Lawrence always so carefully hid',⁵¹ it is possible that he wanted no one, not even Jessie, to read his diary in which he could be most personal. In this context, the word 'destroyed' used by Gelder acquires new connotations. Was the diary destroyed simply by bad luck, or did Lawrence get rid of it himself? Has the existing page survived by coincidence, or did Lawrence choose to spare it thinking that it would not betray much of him to other people if they chanced to read it without his consent? Above all, was the existing entry preceded and followed by other notes, or was it the first and the last one Lawrence ever wrote throughout his early years? Most likely the Mablethorpe notes were not just a whim for Lawrence. By 1906 his interest in keeping a diary was too strong to flag after a single entry.

The four-hundred-and-twenty-one-word-long surviving entry reveals clearly Lawrence's ability for minute observations and detailed descriptions. The experience the diarist and his fellow holiday-makers go through during the Wednesday afternoon is permeated by an enjoyable atmosphere that comes with a flavour of spontaneous adventure. The poetic language is of a piece with the mood and the beautiful scenery of the passage. The image of the boat rising and falling in the waves 'like a child in its mother's arms', and finally gliding away 'beautifully', 'like a live thing, the sun burning

on her red sails'⁵² is one of the earliest examples of Lawrence's power 'to convey the full flavour of his palpitating excitement'.⁵³

The Mablethorpe notes were written during the same year when Lawrence had already started keeping another diary, although not a conventional one. The initial version of 'Laetitia' he was writing by that time can also be considered as something of a literary diary. From the start Lawrence adopted in the 'romance' the first-person method of narration. Frequently enough the novel sounds like a chronology of Cyril Beardsall's life. Lawrence retained his meticulous timing of events in all the four versions of The White Peacock. As in a diary, hardly any chapter or sub-chapter in this novel begins without referring first either to time or locale, or both.⁵⁴

That Jessie failed to notice the link between Lawrence's interest in their keeping a diary and his first novel seems strange. But perhaps Lawrence was careful not to let her see any relation between what he said about keeping a diary and the first draft of 'Laetitia'. The possible expectations mentioned above regarding their keeping a diary suggest that Lawrence viewed it primarily as an experiment. And the 'pedagogical air'⁵⁵ he adopted when he asked for it each week served him as a pretence to avoid any misgivings or hesitations Jessie would have possibly had if she knew that his intentions were far from simply to help her in French. Jessie knew she played a considerable role in bringing The White Peacock to completion, and Lawrence never failed to acknowledge her assistance; 'I its creator, you its nurse,'⁵⁶ he wrote in one of his letters to her. Yet Jessie seems to have been unaware that it was with her diary that she initially began to assist Lawrence to write the first novel.

That Lawrence's and Jessie's diaries were to be kept in French is also significant. Throughout his early years Lawrence had been sensitive of what people thought or said about him. So it was not a surprise that by 1906, or even later, Lawrence was equally sensitive, and for that matter reluctant to let anyone read his written confessions. Until April 15, 1908 when he first asked Blanche Jennings 'to read and criticise some writing of mine that purports to be a novel',⁵⁷ no one else knew that Lawrence had written 'Laetitia' I and II except for Jessie and Alice Dax. Lawrence

would not hasten to show them to other people even after 1908. His unwillingness to make his literary attempts public was almost an obsession. Even Louie Burrows, one of his close friends and the fiancée-to-be, with whom in the meantime he had been discussing so many literary topics and whose literary essays and short stories he had criticised continuously, was not permitted to read a single extract from the first novel until shortly before its publication.

The secrecy that shrouded the writing of Lawrence's first novel, in which he had fictionalised some of his life-experiences, can be compared only with the care with which a diarist hides his diary lest its discovery would fatally impair and destroy his reputation. This explains somehow also why Lawrence thought of keeping a diary in French. That medium would give him a chance to express himself freely, not fearing that his family or any outsider would be able to make anything of his entries in French if they came across his diary. French would allow no trespassing upon his private world.

Lawrence's idea to keep a diary in French is also the earliest indication of his attachment for France. In 1906 he learned that his great grandfather 'was a Frenchman and fought in the battle of Waterloo'.⁵⁸ In Jessie's words, Lawrence 'liked to imagine that he had a French ancestor'.⁵⁹ The discovery of his distant French roots seems to have impressed Lawrence immensely considering that he chose to give French connections and names to his autobiographical fictional characters in works such as The White Peacock, 'The Witch à la Mode', 'The Old Adam', and Sons and Lovers.⁶⁰

His French ancestry, however, was not the only reason that made Lawrence a Francophile. Maupassant, Flaubert, and other French classics he had already read by 1906 also contributed to that. 'Lawrence had a great admiration for French literature and for Balzac in particular.'⁶¹

By the time he was considering keeping a diary in French Lawrence was increasingly concerned also about the expressive power of this language. Often when he was impressed by an English word he tried to find its French equivalent. In many cases he was hardly pleased by the outcome of his attempts. To him, 'great as the

French language was', it has no words for such 'fine' English words like 'wonder' and 'home'.⁶²

But in spite of its 'lacks', French still remained the language of Lawrence's tentative diary. His choice throws light on one of his earliest and justified misgivings that his countrymen would not welcome his writing to the extent he would have wanted them to. From this angle it seems as if he was viewing France as his possible refuge and exile. In December 1910 Lawrence stressed that, to him, going to France meant a chance 'to fulfil my old desire'.⁶³ It was during 1906, when he showed interest in keeping a diary in French, that he initially stressed 'sombrely': 'If English people don't like what I write, and I think it's probable they won't, I shall settle in France and write for the French';⁶⁴ something which he never accomplished himself, and attempted unsuccessfully with some of his literary self-portraits. In The White Peacock, for instance, Cyril goes to France time and again, but Lawrence failed to convey anything explicit through such shuttles. Cyril's frequent visits to France are neither for escape nor for inspiration. He hardly travels there as an artist. For the most part of the novel Cyril's going to France is like going nowhere.

The correspondence to the Chambers family of 1902, the essays written from 1902 to 1906, the interest in keeping a diary in French in 1906, and the few pages of 'Laetitia' I Lawrence started during the same year hardly predicted the versatile and prolific writer he was going to be as from 1907. On the other hand, these early attempts were a clear sign of the kind of writing he would soon be interested in. Self-exploration was one of the main aims of the would-be writer in those early years; something which he initially tried to realise not only through what he wrote but also through what he read. Reading led Lawrence to writing more than anything else in his life.

3. READING FROM A PERSONAL NEED

3.1 Lawrence's Reading up to the Spring of 1902

Lawrence came into contact with books very early in his life, and mainly through his mother. Lydia considered education an important means that would enable her children to leave the working class. It was mainly for this purpose that from the first she took great care to make them love books. When they were too young to read themselves, she read aloud to them, and told them stories from Andersen⁶⁵ and other authors. Those tales impressed all the children, but mainly Lawrence who would frequently ask his elder sister Emily to read to him. Ada recalled, Emily 'thrilled us with adventure stories, such as "Coral Island", "Swiss Family Robinson", or tales from "Little Folks"'.⁶⁶ For Lawrence, those stories, together with hymns and stories from the Bible, were his first wanderings in the world of imagination. They stirred his childish fantasy.

When her children went to school, Lydia was no longer the only reader in the house. As Ada put it, Lydia 'loved to read, and every week piles of books were fetched from the local library to be enjoyed when we were in bed'.⁶⁷ Every year Lydia would usually include books among Christmas presents.⁶⁸ Mother and children would all contribute to increase the number of books of the family library. Everybody took pride in 'the book-case with its rows of books'.⁶⁹

Lawrence shared with his mother a strong desire to read throughout the time he was a pupil at Beauvale school. In his final year there, however, he learned about Lydia something that surprised and marvelled him at the same time. Jessie's sister May Chambers witnessed the excitement of the thirteen-year-old boy when she visited the Lawrences, probably in 1898:

One afternoon, Bert was in high glee and hopped about the doorstep, his eyes shining.

'You'd never guess, I shall have to tell you, because you'd never guess in ever so long.' He paused dramatically. 'My mother's writing poetry! She is, you may not believe it, but she is.'

His mother came to the door, an exercise book almost hidden in the folds of her skirt as it hung from her hand.

'Well, child, how's your mother?'

But he burst out, 'I've told her!'

'Aye, clatting! I might have known. It's nothing, child.'

But Bert cried, 'It is, it is. It's poetry.'

'Nonsense. I just amuse myself sometimes with making up verses.'

'She's going to send it to a mag,' he announced.

'He means a magazine, child,' Mrs. Lawrence explained.

'She sent some once before,' Bert volunteered.

'Aye, and that's all that came of it. I expect it got into the wastepaper basket....'

Nothing more was said about the poetry, though that afternoon her son sketched glowing pictures of his mother becoming famous and making them rich.⁷⁰

That he was the son of a 'poetess' was a revelation for Lawrence. Whether he discovered Lydia's 'secret' himself, or she told him about it herself, is difficult to say. She might have confided her poems to him seeing how attached he was to her, how much he loved reading, and how deeply sensitive he was towards people and nature.

Even if Lydia chose him as her literary confidant, she was hardly aware of the strong effect that would have on him. The disclosure of her drive to write poetry was epiphanic to the little boy. It is almost for certain that by then he already knew that Lydia's grandfather John Newton was a musician, and more importantly, that one of her ancestors, also called John Newton, was famous for his hymn-writing. It is worth while speculating that the discovery of his mother's verses at that time could have made Lawrence conclude that being artistic and writing poetry ran in the family. One wonders if these two facts would not have played a part in his 1906 declaration to Jessie about his initial creative plan: 'It will be *poetry*.'⁷¹

Lawrence was awarded a scholarship to attend Nottingham High School precisely when his mother's poems made literature so important to him. From September 1898 to July 1901 Lawrence was taught there 'by some able graduate-teachers', and studied a broad curriculum including Natural Sciences as well as English language and literature, History, French and German.⁷²

Though he benefited from the High School, Lawrence considered the scholarship 'a doubtful blessing'. Jessie recalled:

he told me that it would probably have been better for him if he had never won the scholarship. It was a great strain, he said, when one was only eleven, to have the long walk to the station and a daily train to catch. There was always the anxiety lest one should miss it, and again he was obliged to be away from home for the midday meal.⁷³

Those factors as well as many hours of separation from his mother were restrictive. Strangely enough, however, that did not seem to have been always the case, particularly during his first term in 1898. In spite of the exhausting daily return journey, Lawrence did remarkably well, especially during his first year there.⁷⁴ If his interest in study declined that was noticeable during the second year; he 'started to do badly' in the summer of 1900.⁷⁵ Although he had been previously distinguished for 'his love of study',⁷⁶ when he left school Lawrence's final results were not satisfactory.

Obviously, the three years in Nottingham offered Lawrence a good chance to expand his knowledge of both humanities and natural sciences. Moreover, it was by then that he first started studying literature according to the chronological appearance of genres and literary schools. During that period he also became acquainted with the lives of some famous poets, playwrights, and writers. Likewise, it was then and there that he first heard about, and read, if not in full, at least some short extracts from many literary masterpieces.

As long as he was a pupil, however, Lawrence was not free to read anything else apart from what was included in the school's curriculum. The 'academic rigour of a formal kind'⁷⁷ he was exposed to at the High School, and the drudgery of the daily 'pile of lessons',⁷⁸ which he had had to do for the past three years apparently frustrated Lawrence at a time when he was becoming ever interested in reading on his own. Lawrence left the High School rather disillusioned and disappointed. This, and the unfavourable economic conditions of the family were the main reasons why he showed no interest in attending university by 1901.

Lawrence hardly had more free time to read as a clerk in Nottingham from late September to December 1901. Yet even during those busy months he did not forsake

books altogether. Everyday after eating his lunch, Lawrence would 'take a short walk out...and then return to the office to spend the remainder of his hour with a book'.⁷⁹

The first opportunity for Lawrence to read as much as he could arose while he was convalescing from the 1901 pneumonia. It is quite possible that during those months when he was unable to leave the house himself, Lawrence continued to borrow books from the local library through his siblings or friends. But even if that was not exactly the case, David Herbert had many books at home. Although the Lawrences were not better off than others, still they 'had always spent more money on books than other families did'.⁸⁰

But what made the Lawrence family's library very special in that mining village was a set of the twenty-volume International Library of Famous Literature, edited by Richard Garnett. Jessie referred to it as 'One of the most treasured possessions of the Lawrence household'.⁸¹ The set was bought by Ernest shortly before his death in October 1901.

Ernest, who had been a 'great reader from a boy', became acquainted 'in his early teens....with most of the present day writers and many of the past'.⁸² In spite of his attachment to reading, Ernest's purchase of Garnett's anthology sometime between 1900 and 1901 was hardly motivated simply by his love for books. When he bought it he was working in London, and was well aware that he would not return to live and work in Eastwood. Sending the multi-volume work to his family signified not only that he did not buy it simply for himself, but also that, perhaps from the start he meant it as a present. But for whom?

Ernest was well aware of his mother's love for books, yet he would not dare to spend for the set £8-18-6 - 'a vast sum of money even for a London clerk who was doing well'⁸³ - at a time when he had already disappointed her. Since 1897 'he very rarely sent money back home'.⁸⁴ Likewise, although Ernest knew that George, Emily, and Ada loved reading, still they did not read as much as to make him buy for them an expensive twenty-volume anthology.

Considering that Lawrence's loss of interest in several subjects in the High School has remained largely unexplained, the fact that it occurred in the wake of the set's arrival at Eastwood implies that it also did play a role in the decline. The time when Ernest bought Garnett's edition coincided with the great attention he was showing for David Herbert's welfare. By 1898 not only was Ernest 'particularly anxious that his younger brother, Bert, should have if possible, a better educational start in life than he himself was able to get',⁸⁵ but also 'helped him'⁸⁶ to do so. Taking into consideration that Lawrence too was attached to, and 'idolised' Ernest,⁸⁷ it is possible that during the second year at the High School he sought advice from the 'knowledgeable' elder brother, and perhaps also asked Ernest to buy him some books.

Whether or not Ernest had Lawrence in mind when he bought the Library, the impact of this 'astonishing' anthology⁸⁸ on his younger brother seems to have been stronger than on anyone else in the household. No matter how much Lawrence was tempted to browse through the many volumes when he was a pupil and then a clerk, it was only during the convalescent months of 1902 that he had the chance to devote to them as much time as he wanted. If after Ernest's death the family regarded the set 'with a reverence amounting to awe',⁸⁹ to Lawrence it had a very practical significance as it proved a very useful source of literature. Jessie believed he 'must have made many literary acquaintances through the medium of these volumes'.⁹⁰ She also noted that Lawrence's letters to her family 'were accounts of what he had been...reading'.⁹¹ Considering that that correspondence has not survived, it is impossible to say if such 'accounts' had to do with what he thought of the anthology. Nevertheless, his earliest letters and cards that have survived indicate that it was during 1902 that Lawrence had first enjoyed '[the] infinite riches in little room'⁹² offered by the anthology. Through this 'brilliantly selected Library'⁹³ the would-be writer had the first chance to be acquainted with the best in the world of literature. The set was a unique work that also suited best the growing special needs of a young man who was already discontented with what educational institutions could offer him. The anthology came to him at a time when he hardly knew what he was after. If Lawrence gained most of his

knowledge through individual study, his reading of the anthology marked the beginning of that lifelong process. To young Lawrence's good luck:

Garnett's anthology - surely one of the most remarkable even in a period of Smilesian self-help - printed substantial extracts (over thirty pages in many instances) from works originating as far afield as Russia and China, Europe and America. Horace, Euripides, Seneca, Spenser, Bacon, Shakespeare, Pope, Swift, Goethe, Renan, Tolstoy, George Eliot, Schopenhauer, Emerson and Verlaine: all are represented, among many others.⁹⁴

The anthology marked the beginning of Lawrence's self-conscious efforts to know who he was, and what he wanted to do. Moreover, what Lawrence read during 1902 strengthened his need to discuss fiction. The 1902 letters to the Chambers family signalled the start of this lifetime habit. At sixteen, Lawrence saw that 'book-loving household'⁹⁵ as the only people he knew until then amongst whom he could express himself freely about what he read.

For Lawrence, resuming the visits at the Haggs after recuperation meant primarily the resumption of literary discussions. It was mainly because of what he had read and thought on his own that the Lawrence of 1902 was not the same as the Lawrence of 1901. The need to express his literary judgement about what he had read, and to be heard had become stronger throughout the months of seclusion. He wanted to see how people reacted towards what he said. Likewise, he needed reassurance that what he thought was right. But he was interested also in people's own literary ideas and interpretations. He needed readers who could both agree and argue with him. He had already found at the Haggs the very people who could help him to reach all those targets.

By 1902 Lawrence had read more than anyone in the Chambers family, but the farmers were always eager to read more. Lawrence had detected in them the potential to respond to literature more enthusiastically than most other people he knew in the mining community. For him, the Chambers family was a literary club of which, after his recuperation, he became the mentor. It was vital for him to keep the literary interests of that family always high. And it was for that purpose that as from the Spring of 1902

onwards his visits to the Haggs 'were a matter of course, and he became almost one of the family',⁹⁶ although it took Jessie sometime to realise fully what urged this demanding 'tutor' to be constantly among them.

3.2 Discovering Himself through Reading

For Lawrence, the end of the High School meant a five-year break in institutionalised education, and the start of the most formative education he could ever get in his life through autodidactic study. From July 1901 to October 1906, when he went to college, Lawrence was a very persistent self-taught student.

Many people who spent their childhood and youth in the company of David Herbert were aware of how much he himself had grown because of books. This is clearly recorded in almost every memoir of Lawrence. Ada, George Neville, and Alan Chambers wrote not necessarily about the same aspect of Lawrence's life. Yet none of them failed to highlight how crucial reading had been for Lawrence especially during his early years.

Only Jessie, though, gave the most comprehensive picture of what Lawrence read from 1902 to 1912. The importance of her detailed account of what Lawrence read during his early years does not consist simply in the enumeration of tens and hundreds of titles of books. Throughout A Personal Record, and in particular in the chapter 'Literary Formation', Jessie highlighted how formative reading was for him both as man and writer.

Jessie classified Lawrence's and her 'orgy of reading'⁹⁷ into two phases. The first one extended from 1901 to 1904. She referred to what they read during that period as 'a sheer revelling in books'.⁹⁸ The second phase began 'before the end of 1904'.⁹⁹ In Jessie's words, from that time onwards their reading 'was almost purely receptive'.¹⁰⁰

But Lawrence's reading had become 'receptive' before 1904. He had 'revelled' in books two or three years prior to the start of his literary friendship with Jessie who herself admitted that as early as 1902 Lawrence 'seemed to be acquainted with nearly everything in the little library'¹⁰¹ of the Mechanics' Institute at Eastwood.

What Jessie and other people recorded and concluded from their literary discussions with Lawrence, as well as what he himself wrote about many books in his letters, autobiographical pieces, and some literary works, reveal that as from 1902 his 'hunting among books'¹⁰² was motivated by the intention of finding who he was, and what he wanted to do in his life.

One of the main reasons why Lawrence became so much attached to reading was that from the first he was impressed to see in some characters bits of what he himself thought and felt. Referring to Lawrence's attachment for David Copperfield, Jessie recalled: 'I was aware even then [c. 1902] that Lawrence felt an affinity with the hero of that story - "the nicest young man in the world", he would quote mischievously.'¹⁰³ David Copperfield's relationships with women, and his attempts to assert himself offered Lawrence an early opportunity to reflect on his own relations with women. Above all, David Copperfield's strong attachment to his mother was bound to impress Lawrence who was very close to Lydia throughout his childhood. Copperfield's early life was strongly affected by his mother's unhappy marriage to Mr Murdstone. Lawrence too suffered considerably from his own parents' tense relationship. Lawrence seemed to have found in David Copperfield a kindred spirit of the hypersensitive child he himself had been. Reading David Copperfield was for Lawrence like reliving tense moments of his own early years. Dickens' psychological approach to David's life was a welcome opportunity for Lawrence to reassess, understand, and come to terms with many of his own childhood troubles. David Copperfield would prove to be a very useful work for Lawrence when he wrote Sons and Lovers, particularly its first part in which he exposes Paul Morel's early tensions and frustrations.

By the time he was enjoying reading David Copperfield Lawrence was equally impressed by yet another memorable Dickensian literary child. Jessie rated Dombey and Son as one of Lawrence's 'great favourites'.¹⁰⁴ She did not elaborate what made this novel so dear to Lawrence, but a close look at Paul Dombey and Paul Morel reveals how much these two literary children share with each other. Probably Lawrence would have been unable to offer such a comprehensive and interesting

picture of Paul Morel if he was not 'trained' beforehand by Dickens how to approach and depict childhood. Lawrence's 'affinity' with *David Copperfield* and *Paul Dombey* was both therapeutic and exploratory; it helped the man to understand further the artist in him, just as it, probably, offered him the first idea of attempting to fictionalise his own early life, tensions, defeats, and triumphs.

Lawrence was not less impressed by yet another well-known young literary hero. He would always speak highly of Stendhal's *Le Rouge et le Noir*, and in particular of its main protagonist Julien Sorel. Undecided and at a loss as to what he would do with his life, it is no wonder that in 1911 Lawrence saw himself as being akin to the hero of Stendhal's masterpiece: 'I feel so much like Julien Sorel.'¹⁰⁵ At odds with himself, and with the society at large, Julien's story offered Lawrence an opportunity to reflect on his own state of affairs. Moreover, Lawrence was impressed by the courage with which Stendhal uncovered in the book what was most personal for him. Stendhal's daring and integrity would be of considerable help to Lawrence himself at a time when he was struggling to find the proper form of 'Paul Morel'.

Lawrence discovered 'bits of himself' not only in such major literary characters but also in many poems and hymns. When he read Tennyson's poem 'Locksley Hall' to Jessie, she felt Lawrence 'conveyed the impression that he was telling me something about himself'.¹⁰⁶ But Jessie had no idea that Lawrence's 'singing with gusto'¹⁰⁷ of the hymn 'We are but little children weak' during an afternoon in March 1912, had to do with his first encounter with Frieda Weekley earlier that day.¹⁰⁸ The words of the hymn carried for Lawrence quite a personal message. 'It's true we *are*,' Lawrence stepped in impulsively when Jessie proposed to sing something else, 'Let's have it.'¹⁰⁹

'Going to the theatre,' recalled Jessie, 'was the same as reading, Lawrence identified himself with the play, and for the time being lived in its atmosphere.'¹¹⁰ On 15 June 1908 Lawrence saw Alexander Dumas *fils*' *La Dame aux Camélias* in Nottingham. The day after the performance he wrote Jessie 'that the play had so upset him that at the end he rushed from his place and found himself battering at the doors until an attendant came and let him out'.¹¹¹ In his words, he had felt 'frightened' because 'I

realize that I, too, might become enslaved to a woman'.¹¹² Shortly afterwards Lawrence was more explicit about what exactly had moved him so much while watching the play. Moreover, he confessed also that his reaction towards the performance was not exclusively that of fear, and by no means of total resentment. He found Sarah Bernhardt, the renowned actress who performed as Margu  rite Gautier, both:

wonderful and terrible. She opened up the covered tragedy that works the grimaces of this wonderful dime show. Oh, to see her, and to hear her, a wild creature, a gazelle with a beautiful panther's fascination and fury, laughing in musical French, screaming with true panther cry, sobbing and sighing like a deer sobs, wounded to death, and all the time with the sheen of silk, the glitter of diamonds, the moving of men's handsomely groomed figures about her! She is not pretty - her voice is not sweet - but there she is, the incarnation of wild emotion which we share with all live things, but which is gathered in us in all complexity and inscrutable fury. She represents the primeval passions of woman, and she is fascinating to an extraordinary degree. I could love such a woman myself, love her to madness; all for the pure, wild passion of it. Intellect is shed as flowers shed their petals. Take care about going to see Bernhardt. Unless you are very sound, do not go. When I think of her now I can still feel the weight hanging in my chest as it hung there for days after I saw her. Her winsome, sweet, playful ways; her sad, plaintive little murmurs; her terrible panther cries; and then the awful, inarticulate sounds, the little sobs that fairly sear one, and the despair and death; it is too much in one evening. She played Manon Lescaut exactly - and it was dreadful.¹¹³

Lawrence saw in Sarah Bernhardt an impressive glimpse of the kind of woman he had been searching for, but had not found yet in real life. Neither Jessie, nor any other woman he had been intimate with till then was 'the incarnation of wild emotion'. Nor did any of them represent 'the primeval passions of woman'. Watching the play was an epiphanic moment in Lawrence's life. It was there and then that he realised for the first time that it would take someone like Sarah Bernhardt in the role of Margu  rite Gautier that could make him love a woman 'to madness; all for the pure, wild passion of it'. The gloomy perspective of finding such a woman in reality, however, would certainly spoil Lawrence's welcome epiphany. This explains to a great extent why he 'looked quite worn out with emotion'¹¹⁴ for several days after the play.¹¹⁵

Almost three years after Bernhardt's impressive performance Lawrence came across Oedipus Tyrannus which helped him to come to terms with who he was, perhaps, more than any other masterpiece he had read or seen on stage before. Since he was very young Lawrence was aware that there was something 'unique' about him,¹¹⁶ that he would be 'something some day....a bit more than ordinary.' This 'divine belief in himself',¹¹⁷ the feeling that he was 'important to the world', that he had a 'mission', however, made him frequently uneasy during the early years. When he first began to write Lawrence would frequently expostulate wishing the 'fates', as he put it in 1910, 'had not stigmatised me "writer"'.¹¹⁸

By the time he was so uneasy about his 'fate' Lawrence took a great interest in Greek tragedies. With their emphasis on 'destiny' those masterpieces played a great role in making Lawrence accept the inevitable 'fate', 'self', 'demon',¹¹⁹ he would desperately want to escape at certain moments. 'Oh, if I only were just a private individual, with no bartering with the public, how glad I should be,' Lawrence wrote to Louie Burrows on 3 March 1911:

I wish all this toil of writing were put away, and we were perfectly untroubled and unanxious, in a quiet country school. - But who can alter fate, and useless it is to rail against it. When I get sore, I always fly to the Greek tragedies: they make one feel sufficiently fatalistic. Im [sic] doing Oedipus Tyrannus just now - Sophocles. I wish with all my heart I read Greek. These Greek tragedies make one quiet and indifferent. They are very grand, even in translation.¹²⁰

The Greek tragedies, but mainly Oedipus Tyrannus, helped Lawrence considerably to come to terms with and give in to his own destiny. Lawrence realised that he could do nothing but pursue his writing career much in the same way that Oedipus cannot alter his fate.

Oedipus, however, was not Lawrence's only tragic *alter ego*. Lawrence found 'bits of himself' also in the character of Hamlet. According to Jessie, as a student Lawrence was more depressed than ever before:

There were times when he was full of doubts and dissatisfaction with himself and everything around him. It was difficult then to see in the introspective young man of twenty-two the youth we had first known, brimming with delight

in life and all it had to offer. He used to call these gloomy fits his 'Hamlet' moments.¹²¹

Lawrence would experience such 'gloomy fits' also after he left college. 'No, but I am so Hamletty,' he wrote to Louie Burrows on 16 May 1911, 'I am so confoundedly and absurdly Hamletty, it's enough to make you sick.'¹²² Like Hamlet who considers it his destiny to set the world right, Lawrence saw himself as a reformer of his nation. In his words, 'I do write because I want folk - English folk - to alter, and have more sense'.¹²³ The difficulties Lawrence encountered in his self-imposed task would inevitably result in gloomy moments similar to those Hamlet goes through when he becomes fully aware of how difficult, if not impossible, his mission is.

Lawrence attempted to see bits of himself also in his philosophical reading, which he considered 'from the angle of his own personal need'.¹²⁴ The process started with Schopenhauer's essay 'The Metaphysics of Love', which Lawrence read some time in 1906-1907. This philosophical piece impressed Lawrence deeply because, to quote Jessie, 'Schopenhauer seemed to fit in with his mood'.¹²⁵

Lawrence read 'The Metaphysics of Love' when he was becoming increasingly uneasy about the nature of his relationship with Jessie. Their previous attempts to define exactly on what footing they were had always failed to bring about a satisfactory conclusion for both of them. Under those conditions, Schopenhauer's essay acquired a special importance to Lawrence. He was tempted to interpret his relation with Jessie in the light of Schopenhauer's ideas.

According to Schopenhauer, love is essentially sexual; it is a disguise of the will of species to procreate. In his words, 'the kernel of passionate love turns on the anticipation of the child'.¹²⁶ As such 'love' as a sentiment is a deception because what the lover and the beloved experience as 'love' is 'in reality the will to live the new being of which they shall become the parents'.

Schopenhauer's interpretation of love as a deceptive sentiment whose ultimate aim always remains the birth of a child sent a clear warning to Lawrence. Apparently, he came to view 'love' as an intimate individual feeling that encompassed only

responsibilities. And by that time he was both unprepared and unwilling to embark on such a serious commitment with any woman, least of all with Jessie who was so possessive.

Unable as yet to put it clearly that what he wanted was the freedom of the artist, Lawrence employed Schopenhauer's ideas to justify his 'ignoring' of Jessie. When 'The Metaphysics of Love' 'exercised such a fascination over him'¹²⁷ Lawrence 'followed the reasoning closely, as always applying it to himself, and his own case'.¹²⁸ Jessie concluded that Lawrence 'thought he found' in Schopenhauer's philosophy 'an explanation of his own divided attitude'.¹²⁹

During the same time Lawrence found himself increasingly at odds with the church, and began to employ Bishop Berkeley's philosophical postulations to vindicate his own unorthodox religious views. Lawrence found particularly interesting Berkeley's statement that everything exists in one's own consciousness. 'If God doesn't exist in my consciousness,' Lawrence insisted, 'then for me God does not exist.'¹³⁰ Lawrence would carry the argument over to many other aspects of his life at that time, and, as Jessie observed, in all his reading he seemed to be 'groping' for something that he could lay hold of as a 'guiding principle' in his own life.¹³¹ Reading served Lawrence as an indispensable means of self-exploration, self-knowledge and self-expression.

3.3 Lawrence and His Friends' Literary Kindred Spirits

Lawrence employed reading to understand not only himself, but also other people around him. 'The true heart of the world,' he wrote in 1908, 'is a book; there are sufficient among your acquaintances to make a complete world, but you must learn from books how to know them.'¹³² Being aware of Jessie's 'desire for knowledge',¹³³ Lawrence believed she suffered from, what Carlyle called, 'the Englishman's hell, the hell of not getting on'.¹³⁴ Likewise, Jessie recalled that when Lawrence read to her 'The Lady of Shalott' - probably some time in 1902 - 'he somehow hinted [it] applied to me'.¹³⁵ This is the earliest indication that Lawrence was critical of what he saw as Jessie's excessive spirituality from the start of their friendship. In the years that

followed, he became more outspoken in his criticism of her attitudes towards sex and soul, and the literature he read in the meantime played a considerable part in this respect. In 1909 Lawrence was confident he had found in Roman mythology Jessie's exact kindred spirit. She recalled that when he bought the photograph of 'Amor et Psyche' in Nottingham during the summer of that year:

he said ominously [it] was for me....on the walk from the station Lawrence poured out his accumulated spleen. It was the old story. There could never, *never* be anything between us but an association of the mind and the spirit. I was Psyche, I was the soul, and I had no other significance for him...But it was uttered with the dehumanized vehemence that was so devastating. At the gate he held out the picture of 'Amor et Psyche'.

'Take it,' he said, 'it is you. You are Psyche, you are the soul, and I leave you, as I *must*'. He gazed at me for a moment with a face set in agony, then turned on his heel and began to stamp his way homeward.¹³⁶

Lawrence found literary equivalents also for almost any other woman he was intimate with during those early years. In March 1911 he told Helen Corke: 'Do you remember Beatrice in Tono Bungay? do you, do you? - *There* - that is your way.'¹³⁷ Like Wells' heroine, Helen Corke was 'deficient', and hence unable to commit herself to a lasting relationship with any man. Whereas to his fiancée Louie Burrows he would write a fortnight later: 'Good bye, my dear. I wish things happened like As You Like It. I reckon you're a lot like Rosalind'.¹³⁸ In spite of her love for him, Louie was unable to understand what made Lawrence so restless, and why he was prepared to risk everything for the sake of pursuing his artistic vocation in a new world full of uncertainties.

Lawrence's friends did not find it difficult to grasp his frequent literary allusions. Lawrence was lucky to be surrounded throughout those early formative years by enthusiastic readers. As from 1902 onwards, those who were in contact with him, however, would read mostly what was suggested and approved by Lawrence himself. He did not simply 'ask'¹³⁹ Jessie and others to read something, but also 'pressed',¹⁴⁰ and 'begged'¹⁴¹ them to read, 'insisted on'¹⁴² them reading, and 'impressed upon'¹⁴³ them that they 'must'¹⁴⁴ read certain books. He also 'recommended'¹⁴⁵ what books they should give each other on their birthdays.

On the other hand, he felt himself responsible for warning his friends which books they had to avoid reading.¹⁴⁶ In 1906 Lawrence sounded like a censor when he 'absolutely forbade'¹⁴⁷ Jessie to read Wuthering Heights: 'You mustn't read it,' he told her 'in his excited way'. And when she asked him why not, he replied: "'You mustn't, that's all. It might upset you.'" I said I meant to read it anyhow, and then he became serious and made me promise I wouldn't.' Being aware of Jessie's disapproval of physical love, Lawrence seems to have been worried lest she would be upset to read about the passionate Catherine-Heathcliff relation. Likewise, it is possible that Lawrence thought the book would lead her to draw a hasty parallel between his 'arrogance', 'egotism', and 'egoism', and Heathcliff's ruthless individualism.

Apparently, Lawrence 'did most of the choosing'¹⁴⁸ not simply to suit the needs of his book-loving friends. He was so meticulous in picking what they should read and avoid primarily because of his 'selfish' targets. Lawrence employed his reading friends as an audience to whom he read what impressed him most, and with whom he could share both the excitement and the anxiety he had experienced on his own. 'I want to read some Verlaine to you - fun!' he wrote Louie Burrows on 10 July 1908, 'I shall see your eyes swing round.'¹⁴⁹ Jessie recalled that he used to look 'so delicately excited'¹⁵⁰ when he read to her Longfellow or other poets, and in particular almost 'every poem' of Francis Turner Palgrave's Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics.¹⁵¹ To Lawrence, such reading sessions went far beyond sharing aesthetic pleasures. His friends' response towards what he read served Lawrence as a means of re-evaluating his own initial reaction. Lawrence's early correspondence is full of examples of his tendency to urge his friends to tell him what they thought of certain books he recommended them.¹⁵² Lawrence needed their opinions to see how much of him and of themselves they could detect in what they read.¹⁵³

Reading served both Lawrence and his friends as a means of self-confession and communion. He viewed reading as an important means through which people could know more about him. This was one of the main reasons why he drew their attention to certain books and characters. 'Do read [James] Barrie's Sentimental Tommy and

Tommy and Grizel,' Lawrence wrote to Jessie in August 1910, 'They'll help you to understand how it is with me. I'm in exactly the same predicament.'¹⁵⁴ Tommy is an artist who can no longer love Grizel because of the risk she poses to his freedom. This is why he feels a 'madness to be free' of her after their long relationship. Like Tommy, Lawrence was determined not to sacrifice his freedom as an artist for the sake of anyone. Many years of partnership had finally convinced Lawrence that where he wanted to go, Jessie was both unable and unwilling to follow him.

Likewise, Lawrence tried to articulate how much he suffered in his childhood as a result of his parents' ongoing conflict by suggesting to Jessie to read Leon Daudet's Le partage de l'enfant. In Jessie's words, Lawrence told her the book 'would help me to realize the position of the child in a home where the parents do not get on well together'.¹⁵⁵

Frequently Lawrence drew parallels between his relations with different people and certain couples in various literary works. Jessie recalled that the process of 'finding correspondences' started initially in 1902. In her words, at that early stage:

our discussion was not exactly criticism, indeed it was not criticism at all, but a vivid re-creation of the substance of our reading. Lawrence would ask me in his abrupt way what I thought of such and such a character, and we would compare notes and talk out our differences. The characters interested us most, and there was usually a more or less unconscious identification of them with ourselves, so that our reading became a kind of personal experience.¹⁵⁶

Jessie had noticed that Lawrence was eager to find in literature equivalents for his relationship with her from the start of their literary friendship. Referring to Louisa Alcott's Little Women, Jessie recalled: 'I was Jo, there was no doubt about that, and Lawrence was Laurie. "Only not quite so nice, do you think?" he said with a glance that asked to be contradicted.'¹⁵⁷ After that 'delightful' story, however, Lawrence would always try to find himself and Jessie in those literary couples whose relations were anything but happy. On 4 November 1908 Lawrence referred to Jane Eyre as one of his 'favourite English books'.¹⁵⁸ Jessie confirmed that the novel 'exercised a real fascination over him....He seemed to brood over the relationship between Jane and

Rochester, whose attitude in particular interested him'.¹⁵⁹ During a talk about the book, Jessie's father Edmund Chambers said: 'It was a funny sort of courtship.' To which Lawrence replied: 'Yes, it was a courtship without a kiss.'¹⁶⁰ Somehow, that applied also to his own relationship with Jessie from 1902 to 1909. It was vital for Lawrence as a young man and as a would-be writer to understand and accept the real nature of his friendship with Jessie, and both of them were aware that that was far from an easy task. It was for this purpose that he drew her attention to some books with characters implicated in strange intimate relations. Jessie recalled that during the 1905 Christmas holidays Lawrence insisted several times:

'We must read Coriolanus together,' and one afternoon he came up with his volume of Shakespeare under his arm and we sat down and read Coriolanus straight away. I wondered at his look of puzzled concentration, and felt that the play had a significance for him that I had not grasped.

'You see, it's the mother who counts,' he said, 'the wife hardly at all. The mother is everything to him.'¹⁶¹

His strong attachment for Lydia made it difficult for Lawrence to establish normal relationships with women, but particularly with Jessie. Only gradually, however, Lawrence came to realise that if he could not love Jessie that was not simply because of his strong attachment for his mother, but because of his need as an artist to remain free and uncommitted to possessive women like Jessie.

In spite of his attempts to free himself from Jessie, Lawrence was always aware of the positive role she played in his life. He would spare no efforts to save their relationship. Lawrence believed in Schopenhauer's conclusion that 'it is quite possible for friendship, without any admixture of sexual love, to exist between two young, good-looking people of different sex if there is perfect fitness of temperament and intellectual capacity'. Lawrence marked this passage from 'The Metaphysics of Love', and wrote in the margin for Jessie: '*Qu'en pensez-vous?*'¹⁶² In December 1908 Lawrence sent Jessie Charles Doughty's Adam Cast Forth, asking her to note especially 'where Eve, after long separation, finds Adam, and he tells her to bind herself to him with the vine strands, lest they be separated again by the Wind of

God'.¹⁶³ Lawrence needed Jessie like Adam needed Adama (Eve) in Doughty's poem. All the same, Lawrence was confident that their relationship had no future if she did not move from her 'old standpoint' of a 'complete union or a complete break'.¹⁶⁴ In 1910 he said to her 'earnestly': 'you must always leave me free.'¹⁶⁵ Jessie remembered that by that time Lawrence 'implored' her 'not to attempt to hold him': 'He told me most impressively the story of the Shirt of Nessus. Something of that kind, he said, something fatal, perhaps, might happen if I insisted on holding him.'¹⁶⁶

Reading helped Lawrence considerably to understand also his relationship with Louie Burrows. Throughout the two years of their engagement Lawrence would frequently draw her attention to particular books and literary couples to enhance her awareness of what was going wrong in their relationship. 'I will borrow a translation of [Maurice Maeterlinck's] Trésor des Humbles for you,' he wrote to her on 13 March 1911, 'because I want you to understand it thoroughly. It will help you to understand yourself and me.'¹⁶⁷

Lawrence's tendency to draw a parallel between his relationships with women and well-known literary couples remained as strong as ever also when he met Frieda. 'I can think of nothing but of Anna Karenina,' Lawrence wrote to Jessie in June 1912.¹⁶⁸ In October of the same year he told Edward Garnett: 'F [i.e. Frieda] had carefully studied Anna Karenin [sic], in a sort of "How to be happy though livanted" spirit. She finds Anna very much like herself, only inferior - Vronsky is not much like me - too much my superior.'¹⁶⁹ Their attachment for Anna Karenina shortly after their 'fearful trip' was somehow therapeutic. They employed Tolstoy's work as a means of understanding further the nature of their newly-struck relationship, and the consequences they had to face as a result of their daring elopement. While reading did not make things necessarily easy for Lawrence, it never stopped helping him in getting to know better himself and those around him. At first, however, his response to literature was a bit naive; it was based almost entirely on identification.

3.4 D. H. Lawrence's Interest in Poets' and Writers' Personal Lives

Lawrence did not learn about himself and those who were close to him only through reading literature. From the start he took a great interest also in the lives of those who made literature. It was a relief for him to see that in many respects his tense life resembled not only those of fictitious characters but also the lives of several writers.

Among poets, William Blake was Lawrence's first kindred spirit. For the first time he came across an account of Blake's life, perhaps, in February 1906.¹⁷⁰ Impressed greatly by what he learned, and eager to share his knowledge with Jessie, Lawrence invited her for a walk at once:

As we walked through the wood he talked to me in his rapt way about Blake, telling me what a wonderful man he was, quite poor, who taught himself everything he knew; how he made pictures and wrote poems that were interdependent, and did the printing and engraving himself, in fact producing the book entirely by his own hands. He told me that Blake's wife was a poor girl whom he taught to read, and also to print and engrave, and what a marvellous helpmate she was to him...For a little time we lived with Blake and his wife.¹⁷¹

Although Lawrence can hardly be described as 'quite poor', like Blake, he knew what a stringent life was like. Likewise, although by 1905 Lawrence had attended school for nine years and the time as a pupil in Eastwood and Nottingham was very formative for him, still as from 1902 onwards, as in the case of Blake, the main bulk of Lawrence's knowledge would result from his own autodidactic reading.

Another aspect of Blake's life that was bound to impress Lawrence was the poet's lifelong passion and talent for painting and engraving. Like Blake, Lawrence began to paint prior to his involvement in creative writing, and would continue to love painting to the end of his life. For both of them painting was yet another means of artistic confession. Lawrence noted that Blake's poems and pictures were 'interdependent'¹⁷² primarily because, like Blake, he too made use of painting in an effort to elucidate further what he tried to express through his writing. Although Blake and Lawrence are not remembered for what they painted, still painting remains an important aspect of

their creativity. Their paintings did not simply interpret what they wrote. They also added new dimensions and values to what they rendered in words and literary images.

It is worth noting that Lawrence's initial decision to write poetry¹⁷³ came by the time he had discovered Blake. Obviously, he was impressed both by Blake's personal life and verse, and this seems to have played a part in Lawrence's choice of poetry as his own genre. At that moment, like any young artist, Lawrence was searching for a role model he could imitate. Seeing how much he shared with Blake, Lawrence was convinced that he had found in him the very artist he had to follow.

The humble origin of Blake's wife, as well as his influence on her, acquired a special significance for Lawrence. In spite of the fact that, like Lawrence, Jessie can hardly be described as 'poor', and although his interest in her was not motivated by the intention to get married, yet Lawrence seemed to have drawn a parallel between Blake's relationship with his wife, and his own literary partnership with Jessie. Lawrence was obviously impressed to know 'what a marvellous helpmate'¹⁷⁴ Blake found in his wife. Apparently, Lawrence was referring to Blake and his devoted wife when almost by the same time he said to Jessie 'in great earnestness': 'Every great man - every man who achieves anything, I mean - is founded in some woman. Why shouldn't *you* be the woman I am founded in?'¹⁷⁵

Lawrence was impressed also by other aspects of Blake's originality. At the age of twenty Lawrence was exerting enormous efforts to find satisfactory answers to his questions regarding religion and freedom of the individual, and Blake's original ideas on these matters were bound to have a positive impact on Lawrence. Blake was a staunch believer in physical freedom, which constitutes one of the fundamental principles of his doctrine of 'enlightened liberty'. As John Worthen has put it, 'Blake's passionate dialectic, his hatred of scientific truth and fact, his insistence upon the supreme value of the individual in the face of the social norm - these became things which stayed with Lawrence'.¹⁷⁶

Finally, Lawrence was impressed also by the visionary element so apparent in both Blake's life and creative work. Like Blake, Lawrence always saw himself as a man with

a vision and a mission. To Lawrence, the discovery of a prophet-artist figure in Blake strengthened further his confidence in himself as someone who was destined to be 'a bit more than ordinary'.¹⁷⁷

By 1905 Lawrence was equally impressed also by the life and work of Robert Burns.¹⁷⁸ In addition to Burns's religious home and unfavourable economic conditions, Lawrence found he had in common with the greatest poet of Scotland, perhaps, more than he had with Blake. In addition to their ill health, and the sacrifices they had to make to pursue education in their early lives, both Burns and Lawrence had also a strong-minded parent. Burns's father and Lawrence's mother insisted and succeeded in giving their sons a better education than that of other children who were in the same unfavourable social and economic conditions.

That Lawrence came across both Blake and Burns at about the same time was perhaps an accident. Yet it was hardly by chance that when he ceased to mention anything about Blake's personal life after 1906, Lawrence would continue to show great interest in the life of Burns for many years to come. Apparently, his own move to the Continent in 1912 reminded Lawrence of Burns's intention to emigrate to the West Indies when personal and domestic troubles proved to be too much for him to cope with. Likewise, it was not difficult for Lawrence to draw a similarity between what he saw as the unsympathetic attitude of the English towards him and his work, and the unfriendly stance of some Scots towards Burns.

In 1912 Lawrence started reading Lockhart's Life of Robert Burns, but by then his interest in Burns went beyond the curiosity to learn what else he had in common with the Scottish bard. Lawrence's renewed interest in Burns was motivated by the intention of writing a novel about him. 'I am thinking so hard of my new novel,' Lawrence wrote to a friend on 17 December 1912:

and since I am feeling hard pushed again, am in the right tune for it. It is to be a life of Robert Burns - but I shall make him live near home, as a Derbyshire man - and shall fictionise the circumstances. But I have always loved him, in a way. He seems a good deal like myself - nicer in most ways. I think I can do him almost like an autobiography.¹⁷⁹

In a second letter written on the same day Lawrence emphasised that although he would do as he liked with Burns in the book 'as far as circumstances go',¹⁸⁰ 'I shall stick to the man. I have always been fond of him, as of a sort of brother. Now, I'll write a novel of him'.¹⁸¹ Although Lawrence abandoned the 'Burns Novel' within days from the moment when he started it,¹⁸² still he retained his interest in Burns long after December 1912.

Alongside his attempts to read himself in the lives of various men of letters,¹⁸³ as in the case of literary characters, Lawrence was inclined to draw analogies between different writers and his own friends. In 1906, Lawrence declared Jessie was like Emily Brontë, and in spite of her protests, he would insist: 'You *are* like her, you are intense and introspective like she was.'¹⁸⁴

Lawrence was impressed by the lives of Blake, Burns, Gorky, Swift, Emily Brontë, and Lamb¹⁸⁵ as much as he was impressed by David Copperfield, Paul Dombey, Hamlet, Julien Sorel, and Vronsky. Finding kindred spirits among writers as well as literary characters helped Lawrence to conclude that he was not an odd man out, just as it convinced him further about his potential as a writer. But if fictitious characters tempted him to write, the lives of various great writers told him how much of their own life-experiences they have fictionalised through some of their main literary protagonists. This was probably the most important discovery Lawrence made by the time he began his own creative writing. Likewise, it made him aware of the most suitable writing techniques and methods he would choose and employ creatively in order to further the process of the liberation of his tensions and to establish himself as a writer.

4. LAYING BARE THE SOUL

George Eliot was perhaps the writer who impressed Lawrence most by the time he was considering seriously starting to write himself. It was with her novels such as

Adam Bede, and The Mill on the Floss that, to quote Jessie, 'we found ourselves in deep waters'.¹⁸⁶ To Lawrence, George Eliot was a revolutionary novelist. In 1906 he said to Jessie 'in the deliberate way he had of speaking when he was trying to work something out in his own mind':

'You see, it was really George Eliot who started it all....It was she who started putting all the action inside. Before, you know, with Fielding and others, it had been outside. Now I wonder which is right?'

I always found myself most interested in what people thought and experienced within themselves, so I ventured the opinion that George Eliot had been right.

'I wonder if she was,' Lawrence replied thoughtfully. 'You know I can't help thinking there ought to be a bit of both.'¹⁸⁷

Lawrence's early thoughts about George Eliot are of interest because they reveal what fundamental aspects of her art had caught his attention by the time he was considering more than ever before to start writing himself. While George Eliot was not the first to put 'all the action inside', she paid unprecedented attention to the inner world of her characters. It was with her and other writers - Tolstoy, Ibsen, Conrad, Wells - that, what Matthew Arnold called, 'the dialogue of the mind with itself', initially emerged as the dominant feature of 'modern work'.¹⁸⁸ Lawrence was particularly enthusiastic about Tolstoy's Anna Karenina. In 1907 Lawrence rated it as 'the greatest novel in the world'.¹⁸⁹ Tolstoy's ability to depict so vividly Anna's most intimate feelings continued to impress Lawrence for many years thereafter, and he was ready to oppose anyone who would 'dare to fall out with it'.¹⁹⁰

Lawrence's great admiration for French literature¹⁹¹ was also linked to a great extent with the ability of some distinguished French authors to lay bare the human soul. Among them he most admired Balzac. Lawrence held in 1908 that:

Balzac can lay bare the living body of the great Life better than anybody in the world. He doesn't hesitate at the last covering; he doesn't point out the absurdities of the intricate innumerable wrappings and accessories of the body of Life; he goes straight to the flesh; and, unlike De Maupassant or Zola, he doesn't inevitably light on a wound, or a festering sore. Balzac is magnificent and supreme; he is not mysterious nor picturesque, so one never sees his portrait.¹⁹²

Lawrence was impressed in particular by Balzac's Eugénie Grandet, which he considered as 'one of the finest novels out of the heart of a man',¹⁹³ and 'as perfect a novel as I have ever read'.¹⁹⁴ To Lawrence, reading Eugénie meant coming 'so near to the well of Life'.¹⁹⁵

It is striking that Lawrence's interest in writers who put the action 'inside' came at a time when he was paying particular attention to autobiographical authors. Prior to his going to university in October 1906, Lawrence was engrossed in reading Thomas Carlyle's Sartor Resartus. Considering the nature and the writing technique of this work, there are reasons to believe that Lawrence owed Carlyle more than has usually been assumed. In Sartor Carlyle recorded his own spiritual adventures. Apparently, this fact acquired a special significance for an ambitious would-be writer like Lawrence who was himself engrossed in his own personal problems, and had already suggested to Jessie that '[l]ots of things we say....would go ever so well into a book'.¹⁹⁶

At university Lawrence took interest in yet another author whose work reflected much of his own life experience. Jessie recalled that as a student Lawrence 'greatly admired'¹⁹⁷ George Borrow, and in particular his autobiographical Lavengro.¹⁹⁸ Lawrence held this work in such high esteem not simply because he found Borrow's life interesting, but primarily because the writer had succeeded in turning his life into art. Jessie recalled Lawrence saying: 'Borrow had mingled autobiography and fiction so inextricably in Lavengro that the most astute critics could not be sure where the one ended and the other began.'¹⁹⁹

Lawrence's attention to, and admiration for personal writers like Carlyle and Borrow came at a time when he was searching for a suitable writing technique for himself. It would be simpleminded to assume that Lawrence thought of fictionalising his own life-experiences under the direct influence of Carlyle and Borrow. The achievement of these two writers, however, apparently encouraged Lawrence to attempt 'something in the same fashion himself'.²⁰⁰

Lawrence's early poems show that the autobiographical element was evident in his writing from the start. There was hardly any moment in his life that Lawrence did not record in verse.

A keen student of his writing from the first, Jessie was aware of how personal Lawrence's poem were. In 'Dreams Old and Nascent', for instance, she concluded at once that 'he was trying to explain himself to me'.²⁰¹ Likewise, she could easily realise which of his poems were about his relationship with her,²⁰² his mother,²⁰³ Louie Burrows,²⁰⁴ Agnes Holt,²⁰⁵ or other people he was intimate with.

Although he considered poetry as 'my dearest treasure',²⁰⁶ Lawrence would soon plant 'my beliefs in my prose'.²⁰⁷ The decision 'to devote myself to prose'²⁰⁸ reflected largely Lawrence's uneasiness about the poetry of his contemporaries. As he put it in 1908, 'Poetry now a days seems to be a sort of plaster-cast craze, scraps sweetly moulded in easy Plaster of Paris sentiment. Nobody chips verses earnestly out of the living rock of his own feeling'.²⁰⁹ To Lawrence, modern verse was a 'half said thing' because it was no longer a natural outcome of 'spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings', which Wordsworth considered to be the main source of poetry.

Moreover, Lawrence decided to employ prose more than poetry because the former suited better the kind of writing he intended to do. Both form and content of poetry made it difficult for Lawrence to fictionalise his life-experiences as thoroughly as possible. This explains to some extent why almost anything Lawrence wrote in fiction in his early years as a writer was initially attempted in verse. This phenomenon is characteristic particularly of his first three novels. The earliest drafts of these major prose works have their genesis in one or several poems. Jessie Chambers held that the poem 'Love on the Farm' was 'a sort of epitome' of the early version of 'Laetitia'.²¹⁰ Similarly, Lawrence wrote the poem 'Do not hold me, Siegmund' when he began 'The Saga of Siegmund'. As for the poem 'Discord in Childhood' - originally part of 'A Life in Harmonies and Discord' - Lawrence composed it almost one year before he began the initial version of 'Paul Morel' in October 1910.

In spite of its personal touch, Lawrence's early writing - both prose and poetry - does not stand for his autobiography. For Lawrence, the personal and the autobiographical were not necessarily two identical notions. His aim was not simply to record his life, but to use it as an artistic source. The extent and the nature of his personal involvement in what he wrote expose both Lawrence's weak points and the ongoing process of his artistic maturity.

That Lawrence was not interested in writing his autobiography is obvious also from the fact that he did not write any purely autobiographical piece until 1913. His first autobiographical articles, in fact, appeared very late in his life; mainly from 1926 to 1929 during which period he wrote some twelve pieces.

As early as 1908 Lawrence put it very clearly in his first aesthetic manifesto - 'Art and the Individual' - that, to him, the Truth in Art was by no means the literal truth. In his words, the human productions of Art 'are not necessarily true, in the strict sense of the word. Not true, except that they have been felt, experienced as if they were true. They express - as well perhaps as is possible - the real *feelings* of the artist'.²¹¹ Lawrence's postulation reflected to a large extent his frustration with Alice Dax's comments on 'Laetitia' II. Apparently, she tended to view Art as a mere replica of everyday life. As Lawrence put it plaintively, Dax could never see the 'real good stuff' in his novel because 'she only cares about whether such people could really exist, and live like other folk in the midst of neighbours, chapels and mothers-in-law; whereas I don't care a damn whether they live or whether they don't'.²¹²

Likewise, Lawrence was equally unhappy with Helen Corke's attitude towards The Trespasser. She failed to see on many occasions that his aim as an artist was not to give a literal account of her tragic love story. To Lawrence, there was no reason why she should be 'sarky' because:

the Saga is a work of fiction on a frame of actual experience. It is my presentation, and therefore necessarily false sometimes to your view. The necessity is not that our two views should coincide, but that the work should be a work of art.²¹³

No matter how much she had been fascinated from the start by the way Lawrence would 'weave incidents' from their daily life into his writing,²¹⁴ even a literary woman like Jessie could not see that 'distorting' the truth about their own personal relationship in Sons and Lovers was an unavoidable and necessary 'treachery'²¹⁵ for the sake of producing art. Although Jessie's anger should not be seen as entirely personal - there is an argument that, after all, Lawrence is somehow distorting the art as well as life in his heaping of guilt on Miriam - yet she was very much reluctant to allow any 'deviation' from the 'truth' in the depiction of her relationship with Lawrence.

In spite of his attempts, Lawrence failed eventually to persuade Jessie to read Sons and Lovers as a novel, and not as their journal. She remembered him once protesting to her 'in a mounting crescendo of irritation and helplessness':

'Of course it isn't the truth. It isn't meant for the truth. It's an adaptation from life, as all art must be. It *isn't* what I think of you; you know it isn't. What shall I put? What do you want me to put...?'²¹⁶

Although on one occasion Lawrence referred to Sons and Lovers as an 'autobiography',²¹⁷ it is worth noting that, as early as October 1910 when he began its first version, he predicted confidently that 'Paul Morel [sic] will be a novel - not a florid prose poem, or a decorated idyll running to seed in realism: but a restrained, somewhat impersonal novel'.²¹⁸ Many are the critics - particularly among feminists - who argue that Lawrence's third novel is neither a 'restrained' nor an 'impersonal' work. His allegedly 'heartless' and 'ungrateful' attitude towards the woman who played such a formative role in his early life, and who eventually 'launched' his writing career are still interesting topics of debate in Lawrence scholarship.

But the attention paid to these issues has also overshadowed somehow equally important questions. While much has been written on the 'death-blow'²¹⁹ impact Sons and Lovers had on the Lawrence-Jessie friendship more needs to be said about the sympathy and remorse Lawrence felt for her not only when she was going through that painful ordeal, but also for many years thereafter. Moreover, it is worth noting that the writing of Sons and Lovers did not cause less anxiety and trouble to Lawrence himself.

Indeed much of what Lawrence wrote from 1906 to 1913 proved to be very painful to him. Lawrence learned in no time that laying bare his soul was not an easy task after all.

5. CONFESSION HURTS

Perhaps the most important conclusion Lawrence drew from his reading was that '[m]ost authors write out of their own personality'.²²⁰ Lawrence voiced this opinion for the first time in March 1909 when he was greatly impressed by H. G. Wells's Tono-Bungay.²²¹ It is interesting that by the time he became increasingly aware of the close relationship between authors' personality and their art Lawrence was very uneasy. Although he liked Tono-Bungay, the novel also 'made him feel in despair about himself'.²²² Apparently, the mood reflected the tension caused both by his ambition to write something like Wells's novel, and the doubt 'that I've got a big enough personality to write out of'.

Lawrence's statement of 1909 comes as a surprise from a writer who for more than three years had been writing mainly from his own experience. The autobiographical nature of his early literary attempts showed that he hardly doubted he could write out of his personality. On the contrary, it proved that from the first he was very confident about it. As early as 1906 Lawrence declared 'weightily': 'I feel I have something to say.'²²³ Likewise, the high opinion he always had of himself as a young man, as well as the great pride he took in his abilities, even when he had not published anything, indicated further that what concerned Lawrence most in 1909 was not the lack of confidence in his personality as a writer.

Lawrence was uneasy by that time mainly because of the kind of writing he was doing. From the start his intention was to be as much an original writer as possible, and to him, originality meant telling people of 'something they have not seen, or have not thought',²²⁴ writing 'live things, if crude and half formed, rather than beautiful dying decadent things with sad odors',²²⁵ being 'true'.²²⁶ Above all, by novelty in fiction

Lawrence meant writing 'as near to life as possible';²²⁷ something which in his case meant first and foremost fictionalising some of his own life-experiences.

Lawrence was aware that he was writing in a society 'still ruled by Victorian conventions of what could and what could not be said in print',²²⁸ and so predicted the unsympathetic reception publishers and readers would reserve for his unorthodox writing. He also foresaw that the public would be hostile to him,²²⁹ just as it had been 'wild' with George Eliot when she had dared to challenge the literary conventions of her time.²³⁰ The prospect of being received unfavourably by publishers and editors would irritate Lawrence often at the beginning of his career as a writer. Nevertheless, this was hardly the main reason why he frequently felt uneasy during those years. The letters Lawrence wrote from 1906 to 1913 reveal that he was often tense throughout that period because of the personal aspect of his writing.

The secrecy shrouding the writing of his first 'autobiographical' novel The White Peacock is a clear indication of his reluctance to let others be acquainted with what was so intimate to him. The personal kind of writing he was doing was also one of the reasons why at the beginning he was so hesitant to submit his writing for publication. Even when he attempted to have something published Lawrence would not approach journals directly. In the spring of 1908 he sent, what Jessie believed to be an essay, not to a magazine but to a writer who contributed a weekly article in the Daily News.²³¹ Lawrence's decision shows that, at this stage, 'he was more anxious about being accepted as a writer than about getting his writing into print'.²³² Even by then, however, it cannot be ruled out that Lawrence was equally interested in having his writing published. If that was not the case, then Lawrence would not have considered the Daily News writer's decision to return the essay unread as a publishing failure. Jessie 'recognised only too well the chagrin' that lay behind the 'casual words' Lawrence said when he received the manuscript: 'I've tried, and been turned down, and I shall try no more. And I don't care if I never have a line published.'²³³

In spite of this declaration, Lawrence would continue his indirect attempts to publish soon thereafter, just as he had already tried a year earlier. In October 1907

Lawrence asked Louie and Jessie to enter two of his short stories in the Nottinghamshire Guardian Christmas competition whilst he submitted a third one himself. Lawrence's decision to ask the two literary women to send his own works to the newspaper may have well been prompted by the rule that no competitor could be awarded more than one prize. Yet the fact that he did not choose 'A Prelude' for his own entry does not seem to have been purely accidental. This 'sentimental little story'²³⁴ was entered by Jessie.

'A Prelude' is one of the best pieces Lawrence ever wrote about her household; in it he recreated many family particulars. In terms of its setting, the atmosphere, and particularly of the relationship between Alfred (George) and Nellie (Lettie), the short story can be considered as one of the early versions of The White Peacock.

Considering the wealth of details about the Chambers family he recorded in 'A Prelude', apparently, Lawrence concluded in advance that anyone from his Eastwood circle of friends who would read the story would have no difficulty in tracing the real people described in it. Only Jessie's authorship could offer him the disguise he needed for such a personal piece of writing in case it won a prize and was published. That Lawrence seemed to have considered carefully at least some of these details beforehand is obvious from his attempts to deny his authorship when 'A Prelude' won its category and was published under Jessie's name. 'The tale is Jessie's,' Lawrence insisted when her sister May Holbrook, who had heard something about him being the author, asked him directly for the truth, 'do not accept any such reports. Whoever can have promulgated it? The miserable cacklers in Eastwood are always so ready to jump to conclusions and bandy names.'²³⁵ But he did not forget also to ask May to keep the affair secret at her parents' home: 'Do not say anything to those at the Hags, it would make them feel so uncomfortable, perhaps vexed - '²³⁶

Whenever he tried to contact publishers during the two years that followed Lawrence did not approach them himself but through 'agencies'.²³⁷ Even his first appearance in print as a poet was realised through mediation. Jessie succeeded in obtaining his consent to send some of his poems to the English Review, but only after

she agreed to follow his instruction to give him a *nom de plume*. Lawrence held that he needed a pseudonym because 'I don't want folk in Croydon to know I write poetry'.²³⁸ Considering how personal his early poems were, however, it is possible that Lawrence insisted on not having his identity disclosed because he did not want the local people to see how much of himself he confessed in his writing. Lawrence's reluctance to allow Jessie to send his poems to the Review was probably an indication of the doubts he had that anyone could be interested in the creative writing of a teacher. Likewise, his belief that 'they'd never take it'²³⁹ was also a reflection of the doubts he had that so much personal writing like his could be acceptable to publishers.

But his prediction proved wrong. Hueffer not only welcomed Lawrence's poems in general, but also published two of them in the November issue. This event was crucially important for Lawrence, not only because it marked the launching of his literary career, but also because it offered him inestimable encouragement for the personal writing he intended to do.

In spite of his decision 'to send my tales direct to the mags'²⁴⁰ in the wake of Hueffer's positive reply, Lawrence continued to be uneasy about his writing. This uneasiness was expressed either in the form of the slow progress he made in some works, or his reluctance to write at all. A web of factors like frequent bouts of poor health, lack of time as a student, and pressure of duty as a teacher did contribute to the young writer's uneasiness. Nevertheless, the tendency to fictionalise his own life-experiences, and the reluctance to make this personal writing public were perhaps major factors behind Lawrence's lack of progress in certain works, his frequent declarations about not caring 'a damn' about them, or his dreading at times to put pen to paper at all.²⁴¹

In some cases, writing about himself proved to be such a strain for Lawrence that at first he even got rid of some of his early most personal works. 'I must have burnt many poems that had the demon fuming in them,' Lawrence remembered by the end of his life, 'The fragment "Discord in Childhood" was a long poem, probably was good, but I destroyed it.'²⁴² Fortunately, however, Lawrence did not destroy the poem

completely. Its surviving fragments throw considerable light upon Lawrence's childhood tensions resulting both from the parents' conflict, and his own rather abnormal attachment for his mother. Lawrence was using his art from the first to ease such early tensions, and the idea of making such intimate details known to others would inevitably give him cause for concern.

Lawrence felt like destroying even his first novel for the same reason. It was because of the autobiographical element of 'Laetitia' that Lawrence was so 'sensitive'²⁴³ about it, and felt 'like one on the brink of a cold bath' when he decided to show the manuscript to a friend in April 1908.²⁴⁴ 'I shrink from the thought of anyone's reading that work,' he wrote a month later, 'if I were not vain and poor I should like to put it in the fire.'²⁴⁵ Gradually the inclination to destroy 'Laetitia' II was replaced by his insistence 'to keep the stuff at home, put it away in some dark obscurity of a desk for a year or two'.²⁴⁶

In the case of the second novel, Lawrence would no longer wish to destroy or hide the work but to suppress it. His correspondence from October to June 1911 is full of remarks about, what he calls, 'not a whim, but a resolve'²⁴⁷ not to publish The Trespasser.²⁴⁸

Lawrence offered several reasons for his reluctance to have his first novels published. His lack of experience as a writer, as well as his sensitivity as to what critics would think about the work of a provincial artist like him would inevitably make Lawrence think twice before deciding to make his art known to the public.²⁴⁹ All the same, a good deal of Lawrence's remarks about what he wrote from 1906 to 1913 reveal that his reluctance and hesitation to become a publishable writer was also linked with the highly personal nature of his writing. 'Everything that I am now,' Lawrence confessed shortly after he had completed 'Laetitia' II in 1908, 'all of me, so far, is in that. I think a man puts everything he is into a book - a real book.'²⁵⁰ Considering that Lawrence had always been highly sensitive to what others thought about him, it is not surprising that he considered the theme of his novel 'abominable',²⁵¹ and the sight of its manuscript 'repugnant'.²⁵² He was often 'inclined to blush' because of the work.²⁵³

Lawrence did not expect his personal writing to find a sympathetic reception among readers and critics. He also feared that they would ridicule him personally for what he confessed in it about himself. As such he was determined, as he put it in June 1908, 'not [to] be a laughingstock'; something which he hoped to realise by hiding the manuscript:

'Nisi ventis debes ludibrium'.

That is a young man's motto - it means 'lest thou owe the winds a laughingstock' - I ought to substitute 'filiis' or 'virginibus' for 'ventis', but it wouldn't scan. I remember I warn my hero [i.e. Cyril Beardsall] with those words

'Nisi ventis debes ludibrium'.²⁵⁴

Likewise, 'Nethermere' was very much in his mind when six months later Lawrence wrote: 'I sometimes feel as if I'd stood like a naked slave in the market, under the glances of a crowd of fools safely swathed in stupidity.'²⁵⁵ Immediately after completing the final manuscript of The White Peacock Lawrence stressed: 'When I have *finished* a writing, I hate it. In it, I am vulnerable, naked in a thickly clothed crowd.'²⁵⁶

Lawrence felt vulnerable for the same reason in the second novel. In his words, The Trespasser was a work:

one can't regard easily - I mean, at one's ease. It is so much oneself, one's naked self. I give myself away so much, and write what is most palpitant, sensitive self, that I loathe the book, because it will betray me to a parcel of fools. Which is what any deeply personal or lyrical writer feels, I guess....I wish the Trespasser [sic] were to be issued privately, to a few folk who had understanding.²⁵⁷

It could be argued that the uneasiness the first two novels had caused him because of what he exposed about his tensions was one of the reasons why Lawrence was unwilling to disclose much about his early life-experiences in 'Paul Morel' I and II. Keeping his 'famous' brother's story out of these two versions of the novel does not seem to have been completely an accident. Apparently, Lawrence avoided Ernest on

purpose as he was reluctant to uncover how much his brother had affected not only his relationship with Lydia but also his whole early life.

Lawrence's decision to strengthen the presence of the autobiographical element in 'Paul Morel' III would inevitably increase Lawrence's uneasiness about this work. Sons and Lovers, or 'Misericordia' as he referred to it once,²⁵⁸ would continue to give Lawrence 'the blues' to the last moment before he sent it to the publisher.²⁵⁹

His wide knowledge of literature and of many writers' lives helped Lawrence to conclude that he was not the only artist to suffer because of what he wrote. Other 'deeply personal or lyrical writers',²⁶⁰ Lawrence liked to believe, should have found writing about themselves equally difficult and disturbing. 'I wonder whether [Richard] Jefferies used to wince away from the Story of my Heart [sic],' Lawrence wrote in December 1911.²⁶¹ A month later he reiterated: 'I often think Stendhal must have writhed in torture every time he remembered Le Rouge et le noir [sic] was public property: and Jefferies at The Story of my Heart.'²⁶² Both Stendhal and Jefferies fictionalised extensively their life-experiences in the above autobiographical works at large, but mainly in the principal characters. The degree to which Lawrence uncovered himself through Cyril Beardsall, Siegmund MacNair, and Paul Morel made him feel often very hostile towards such literary kindred spirits. In July 1908 he referred to Cyril as 'a young fool at the best of times, and a frightful bore at the worst'.²⁶³ Shortly afterwards, Lawrence was so opposed to Cyril that he even said he intended '[to] stop up the mouth of Cyril - I will kick him out - I hate the fellow....I *will* leave out Cyril, the fool'.²⁶⁴ Lawrence would not have a higher opinion of Siegmund either. And as for Paul, this kindred spirit was 'damned' and 'loathed' by Lawrence throughout the time he was engaged in writing Sons and Lovers.

No matter how much he suffered as a result of what he uncovered about himself during those early years, Lawrence pursued with courage and determination to write what his 'inward convictions'²⁶⁵ told him, not only from 1906 to 1913, but throughout his life. This does not come as a surprise from someone like Lawrence who believed since he was very young that he was 'important to the world, and...resented any claim

that would curtail his experience and therefore his usefulness'.²⁶⁶ Feeling himself 'a medium charged with some power for the good of mankind', Lawrence was prepared to pay any price for the sake of his 'mission',²⁶⁷ even if it meant becoming a social outcast, or 'a laughingstock'.

From the first writing meant for Lawrence 'the work he was urged to do from within'.²⁶⁸ Writing helped him to know himself more than reading, and indeed more than any other activity, artistic or otherwise, which he engaged himself in during the early years. But while writing served Lawrence as a therapeutic means to know himself, he also employed it for exploratory purposes that went beyond the target of self-knowledge. He used his life experience as a major source through which he could learn, as he put it, not simply about 'the little, vain, personal D. H. Lawrence'.²⁶⁹ Nor did he write merely because he was interested in getting to know more about the 'dozens of little pictures' that purport 'to be myself'.²⁷⁰ One of Lawrence's greatest merits as a 'personal' writer does not consist in how much or how sincerely he records his own life, rather than to what extent his fictionalised life-experiences uncover the gestation, growth, and maturity of the artist figure as such. Each of Lawrence's first three novels represents an important stage in his interest in the artist theme. The study of the early major artistic protagonists - Cyril, Siegmund, Paul - elucidates not only how these typically Lawrentian heroes emerged and evolved from 1906 to 1913, but also how they contributed to Lawrence's handling of the artist theme in what he wrote thereafter.

NOTES: CHAPTER TWO

1. Letter to Blanche Jennings, 4 May 1908, in Letters, i, pp. 47-51 (p. 50).
2. Jessie Chambers, Personal Record, p. 56.
3. Ibid., p. 57.
4. Letter to Blanche Jennings, 4 May 1908, in Letters, i, pp. 47-51 (p. 49).
5. Letter to William Hopkin, 20 February 1911, in Letters, i, pp. 232-3 (p. 233).
6. D. H. Lawrence: A Composite Bibliography, Volume 3, 1925-1930, edited by Edward Nehls, (Madison: U of Wisconsin, 1959), p. 233. (Hereafter cited as Nehls, iii)
7. Personal Record, p. 103.
8. Ibid., p. 91.
9. G. H. Neville, A Memoir of D. H. Lawrence (The Betrayal), edited by Carl Baron (Cambridge, 1981), p. 71. (Hereafter cited as Memoir of Lawrence).
10. Ibid., p. 72.
11. Personal Record, p. 134.
12. Ibid., pp. 42-3.
13. John Worthen, Early Years, p. 107.
14. Personal Record, p. 91.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
18. The words of David Chambers, Jessie's brother, are quoted in John Worthen's Early Years, p. 356.
19. Ada Lawrence and G. Stuart Gelder, Early Life of D. H. Lawrence. Together with Hitherto Unpublished Letters and Articles (London: Martin Secker, 1932), p. 45. (Hereafter cited as Early Life).
20. Personal Record, p. 91.
21. Ibid., p. 89.

22. Ibid., p. 201.
23. Ibid.
24. Letter to Blanche Jennings, 26 October 1908, in Letters, i, pp. 85-7 (p. 86).
25. Personal Record, p. 40.
26. Ibid., p. 74.
27. Ibid., p. 57.
28. Letter to Edward Garnett, 21 January 1912, in Letters, i, pp. 353-4 (p. 353).
29. Personal Record, p. 135.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid., p. 136.
33. Ibid., p. 135.
34. Ibid., p. 29.
35. Ibid., p. 144.
36. Ibid., p. 25.
37. Early Years, p. 120.
38. Personal Record, p. 100.
39. Ibid., p. 57.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid., p. 103.
42. Ibid., p. 181.
43. Ibid., p. 111.
44. Ibid., p. 144.
45. Ibid., p. 135.

46. Ibid.
47. Ibid., p. 91.
48. D. H. Lawrence's single diary entry dated 'Wednesday. August 9, 1906' was published for the first time by his sister Ada and G. Stuart Gelder in Young Lawrence: Early Life of D. H. Lawrence (Florence: Orioli) in 1931, and a year later in Early Life of D. H. Lawrence (London: Martin Secker) (see Early Life, pp. 55-8).
49. Early Life, p. 55.
50. Personal Record, p. 129.
51. Memoir of Lawrence, p. 165.
52. Early Life, pp. 57-8.
53. Personal Record, p. 40.
54. For Lawrence's tendency to make frequent temporal/spatial references in his first novel see WP, pp. 21:4-5, 58:30, 63:24-5, 80:30, 91:4-5, 99:9, 103:4-5, 105:2-26, 152:19-20, 159:4-6, 170:29-32, 174:28-9, 175:34, 177:4, 191:4-5, 205:4-6, 220:36, 225:3-5, 237:5-6, 238:27-8, 267:2, 305:4-5, 314:4-5.
55. Personal Record, p. 135.
56. Ibid., p. 189.
57. Letter to Blanche Jennings, 15 April 1908, in Letters, i, pp. 43-5 (p. 43).
58. Personal Record, p. 106.
59. Ibid.
60. I am indebted to John Worthen for this observation (see Early Years, pp. 8, 62).
61. Personal Record p. 105.
62. Ibid., pp. 105-6.
63. Letter to Louie Burrows, 27 December 1910, in Letters, i. pp. 214-6 (p. 215).
64. Personal Record, p. 106.
65. Early Years, p. 52.
66. Early Life, p. 29.

67. Ibid., p. 21.
68. Ibid., p. 41.
69. Ibid., p. 20.
70. Nehls, iii, p. 560.
71. Personal Record, p. 57.
72. James T. Boulton, ed., Introduction, The Letters of D. H. Lawrence, Volume I, September 1901-May 1913, by D. H. Lawrence (Cambridge, 1979), pp. 1-20 (p. 4) (Hereafter cited as Introduction to Letters, i).
73. Personal Record, p. 73.
74. For D. H. Lawrence's very good results during the first year at the High School see the term report in Early Life, p. 55.
75. Early Years, p. 87.
76. Willie Hopkin's words about Lawrence's 'love of study' at the age of twelve are quote in John Worthen's Early Years, p. 79.
77. James T. Boulton, Introduction to Letters, i, p. 4.
78. Early Years, p. 83.
79. Memoir of Lawrence, p. 89.
80. Early Years, p. 110.
81. Personal Record, p. 92.
82. F. M., 'Death of an Eastwood Young Man in London', Eastwood and Kimberley Advertiser 18 October 1901:2.
83. Early Years, p. 111.
84. Ibid., p. 81.
85. Memoir of Lawrence, p. 39.
86. Early Years, p. 80.
87. Memoir of Lawrence, p. 64.
88. James T. Boulton, Introduction to Letters, i, p. 6.

89. Personal Record, p. 92.
90. Ibid.
91. Ibid., p. 91.
92. Richard Garnett, ed., Introduction, International Library of Famous Literature, 20 volumes, (1899), Volume I, p. xiv.
93. James T. Boulton, Introduction to Letters, i, p. 5.
94. Ibid.
95. Personal Record, p. 25.
96. Ibid., p. 28.
97. Ibid., p. 94.
98. Ibid., p. 99.
99. Early Years, p. 121.
100. Personal Record, p. 99.
101. Ibid., p. 93.
102. Ibid.
103. Ibid., pp. 95-6.
104. Ibid., p. 96.
105. Letter to Louie Burrows, 28 April 1911, in Letters, i, pp. 262-3 (p. 262).
106. Personal Record, p. 95.
107. Ibid., p. 200.
108. I am grateful to John Worthen for this information (see Early Years, p. 380).
109. Personal Record, p. 200.
110. Ibid., p. 109.
111. Ibid.
112. Ibid.

113. Letter to Blanche Jennings, 25 June 1908, in Letters, i, pp. 56-60 (p. 59).
114. Personal Record, p. 109.
115. Lawrence recorded the strong impact Sarah Bernhardt's performance had on him also in The White Peacock, pp. 30-1.
116. Personal Record, p. 49.
117. Ibid., pp. 213-4.
118. Letter to Helen Corke, 1 June 1910, in Letters, i, pp. 161-2 (p.162).
119. Letter to Edward Garnett, 29 January 1912, in Letters, i, pp. 358-9 (p. 359).
120. Letter to Louie Burrows, 3 March 1911, in Letters, i, pp. 234-5 (p. 235).
121. Personal Record, p. 106.
122. Letter to Louie Burrows, 16 May 1911, in Letters, i, pp. 269-70 (p. 269).
123. Letter to Arthur McLeod, [23 April 1913], in Letters, i, pp. 543-5 (p. 544).
124. Personal Record, p.113.
125. Ibid., p.111
126. Ibid., p. 134.
127. Ibid., p. 133.
128. Ibid., p. 111.
129. Ibid., pp. 111-2.
130. Ibid., p. 112
131. Ibid., pp. 112-3.
132. Letter to May Holbrook, 2 December 1908, in Letters, i, pp 96-8 (p. 96).
133. Personal Record, p. 29.
134. Ibid., p. 46.
135. Ibid., p. 95.
136. Ibid., pp. 160-1

137. Letter to Helen Corke, [14 March 1911], in Letters, i, pp. 238-40 (p. 239).
138. Letter to Louie Burrows, 29 March 1911, in Letters, i, pp. 245-7 (p. 247).
139. For Lawrence's tendency to ask his friends to read certain books see Personal Record, p. 119; and in Letters, i, see Lawrence's letters to Blanche Jennings, 6 March 1909, pp. 118-21 (p. 119), and 8 May 1909, pp. 126-9 (p. 128); and to Louie Burrows, [16 July 1911], p. 288.
140. Personal Record, p. 94.
141. Ibid., p. 96.
142. Ibid., p. 101.
143. Ibid., p. 121.
144. Letters to Blanche Jennings, 6 March 1909, in Letters, i, pp. 118-21 (p.119); and to Louie Burrows, [16 October 1909], pp. 139-40 (p.139).
145. Personal Record, p. 108.
146. In 1902 Lawrence regretted he had recommended Watts-Dunton's Aylwin to Jessie, and as a student he 'earnestly' 'begged' her not to read The Picture of Dorian Grey (see Personal Record, pp. 92, 110 respectively).
147. Ibid., p. 102.
148. Ibid., p. 93.
149. Letter to Louie Burrows, 10 July 1908, in Letters, i, pp. 60-1 (p. 61).
150. Personal Record, p. 95.
151. Ibid., p. 99.
152. Jessie Chambers recalled that Lawrence 'begged' her to read Robert Louis Stevenson's The Master of Ballantrae, and urged her to inform him of her opinion about it: 'I want to know what you think of it' (see Personal Record, p. 96). On 26 April 1911, Lawrence wrote to Sallie Hopkin that she should read Euripides' Trojan Women, and Bacchae, and Sophocles' Oedipus. 'And will you tell me what you think?' he pleaded with her (see Letters, i, pp. 260-1 (p. 261)).
153. It was not accidental that in August 1911 Lawrence wanted his sister Ada to read Greek tragedies when she was going through 'all the torment of religious unbelief' (see in Letters, i, Lawrence's letters to Ada Lawrence, 9 April 1911, pp. 255-7 (p. 255), and to Sallie Hopkin, 26 April 1911, pp. 260-1 (p. 261)). From his own experience Lawrence had already concluded that the Greek tragedies he used

'[to] fly to' when he got sore 'make one feel sufficiently fatalistic' (see the letter to Louie Burrows, 3 March 1911, in Letters, i, pp. 234-5 (p. 235)). He hoped Ada too would read them according to her needs, and come to terms with her crises: religious, philosophical, pessimistic.

154. Personal Record, p. 182.

155. Ibid., p. 123.

156. Ibid., pp. 93-4.

157. Ibid., p. 92.

158. Letter to Blanche Jennings, 4 November 1908, in Letters, i, pp. 87-9 (p. 88).

159. Personal Record, p. 98.

160. Ibid., p. 63.

161. Ibid., pp. 61-2.

162. Ibid., p. 134.

163. Ibid., p. 119.

164. Ibid., p. 182.

165. Ibid.

166. Ibid., pp. 181-2.

167. Letter to Louie Burrows, 13 March 1911, in Letters, i, pp. 237-8.

168. Letter to Jessie Chambers, [June 1912], in Letters, i, p. 412.

169. Letter to Edward Garnett, [15 October 1912], in Letters, i, pp. 461-3 (p. 463).

170. Personal Record, p. 62.

171. Ibid., pp. 62-3.

172. Ibid., p. 62.

173. Ibid., p. 57.

174. Ibid., p. 63.

175. Ibid., p. 59.

176. Early Years, p. 121.
177. Personal Record, p. 49.
178. Jessie Chambers remembered that, probably in 1905, Lawrence 'liked' Robert Burns's "Mary Morison" (see Personal Record, p. 100).
179. Letters to Arthur McLeod, 17 December 1912, in Letters, i, pp. 487-8 (p. 487).
180. Letter to Edward Garnett, 17 December 1912, in Letters, i, pp. 488-9 (p. 489).
181. Ibid.
182. For Lawrence's abandoning of the 'Burns Novel' see in Letters, i, his letters to Ernest Collings, 24 December 1912, pp. 490-2 (p. 491); and to Arthur McLeod, 17 January 1913, pp. 504-6 (pp. 504-5).
183. Blake and Burns were not the only writers Lawrence saw as his kindred spirits during his early years. Jessie recalled that he was deeply impressed with the 'strange love story' (see Personal Record, p. 99) of Jonathan Swift and Esther Johnson when he read Swift's correspondence Little Journal, later known as the Journal to Stella. In 1910 Lawrence took an interest in Gorky's life and saw himself as 'very much an English equivalent' of the Russian writer (see letter to Louie Burrows, 22 December 1910, in Letters, i, pp. 208-10 (p. 209).
184. Personal Record, p. 130.
185. Ibid., p. 64.
186. Ibid., p. 97.
187. Ibid., p. 105.
188. For Lawrence's love for, what he called 'modern work', see his letter to Louie Burrows, 28 February 1909, in Letters, i, pp. 117-8 (p. 118).
189. Personal Record, p. 114.
190. Letter to Blanche Jennings, 8 May 1909, in Letters, i, pp. 126-8 (p. 127).
191. Personal Record, p. 105.
192. Letter to Blanche Jennings, 11 November 1908, in Letters, i, pp. 91-2.
193. Letter to Blanche Jennings, 4 November 1908, in Letters, i, pp. 87-9 (p. 89).
194. Letter to Blanche Jennings, 11 November 1908, in Letters, i, pp. 91-2 (p. 91).
195. Ibid., p. 92.

196. Personal Record, p. 57.
- 197 Ibid., p. 109.
198. Ibid., p. 110.
199. Ibid.
200. Ibid.
201. Ibid., p. 157.
202. Ibid., pp. 180, 197.
203. Ibid., p. 184.
204. Ibid., pp. 139,142.
205. Ibid., p. 180.
206. Letter to Maud Villiers-Stuart, 12 October 1911, in Letters, i, pp. 312-3 (p. 313).
207. Letter to Louie Burrows, 11 September 1909, in Letters, i, pp. 137-8 (p. 138).
208. Letter to Rachel Annand Taylor, 30 September 1910, in Letters, i, pp. 179-80 (p. 180).
- 209 Letter to Blanche Jennings, 17 July 1908, in Letters, i, pp. 61-4 (p. 63).
210. Personal Record, pp. 116-7.
211. D. H. Lawrence, 'Art and the Individual', in Early Life of D. H. Lawrence, by Ada Lawrence and G. Stuart Gelder (London: Martin Secker, 1932), pp. 197-211 (205).
212. Letter to Blanche Jennings, 15 June 1908, in Letters, i ,pp. 54-6 (p. 55).
213. Letter to Helen Corke, 1 February 1912, in Letters, i, pp. 359-60 (p 359).
214. Personal Record, p. 104.
215. In her letter to Helen Corke of 16 March 1913 Jessie Chambers refers to the Miriam part of Sons and Lovers as 'a slander, a fearful treachery' (see Letters, i, p. 531 n. 1).
216. Personal Record, p. 204.
217. Letter to Sallie Hopkin, 23 December 1912, in Letters, i, p. 490.

218. Letter to Sydney Pawling, 18 October 1910, in Letters, i. pp. 184-5 (p. 184).
219. Personal Record, pp. 202-3.
220. Ibid., p. 121.
221. Lawrence expressed his high admiration for H. G. Wells's Tono-Bungay particularly in his letter to Blanche Jennings of 6 March 1909 (see Letters, i, pp. 118-21 (p. 119)).
222. Personal Record, p. 121.
223. Ibid., p. 102.
224. Letter to Louie Burrows, [September 1906], in Letters, i, pp. 29-30 (p. 30).
225. Letter to Blanche Jennings, 20 January 1909, in Letters, i, pp. 106-11 (p. 108).
226. Letter to Louie Burrows, [16 October 1909], in Letters, i, pp. 139-40 (p. 140).
227. Ibid.
228. Anthony Beal, ed., Introduction, Selected Literary Criticism, by D. H. Lawrence (London: Heinemann, 1964), pp. ix-xii (p. x).
229. For Lawrence's predictions that his early works (mainly The Trespasser, and Sons and Lovers) would not be received well by the public and critics see in Letters, i, his letters to Frederick Atkinson, 15 July 1910, pp. 169-70 (p. 169); to Helen Corke, [14 March 1911], pp. 238-40 (p. 239); and to Arthur McLeod, [5 February 1913], pp. 512, and [21 May 1913], pp. 551-2 (p. 552).
230. Personal Record, p. 105.
231. Ibid., p. 155.
232. Early Years, p. 190.
233. Personal Record, p. 156.
234. Ibid., p. 113.
235. Letter to May Holbrook, [11 December 1907], in Letters, i, p. 41.
236. Ibid.
237. For Lawrence's attempts to contact publishers through 'agencies' see in Letters, i, his letters to Louie Burrows, 19 August 1909, pp. 135-6 (p. 136), and 11 September 1909, pp. 137-8 (p. 138).

238. Personal Record, p. 157.
239. Ibid.
240. Letter to Louie Burrows, 19 August 1909, in Letters, i, pp. 135-6 (p. 136).
241. For Lawrence's lack of progress in certain works, and his reluctance to write see in Letters, i, his letters to Frederick Atkinson, 11 February 1911, pp. 229-30 (p. 230), and to Louie Burrows, 12 April 1911, pp. 258-9 (p. 258), 28 April 1911, pp. 262-3 (p. 262), 10 October 1911, pp. 309-11 (p. 310), 3 November 1911, pp. 321-2 (p. 322).
242. D. H. Lawrence, 'The Uncollected Poems of D. H. Lawrence', in Phoenix (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985) pp. 251-4 (p. 252).
243. Letter to Blanche Jennings, 15 April 1908, in Letters, i, pp. 43-5 (pp. 43-4).
244. Ibid., p. 43.
245. Letter to Blanche Jennings, 4 May 1908, in Letters, i, pp. 47-51 (p. 50).
246. Letter to Blanche Jennings, 15 June 1908, in Letters, i, pp. 54-6 (p. 55).
247. Letter to Frederick Atkinson, 11 February 1911, in Letters, i, pp. 229-30 (p. 230).
248. For Lawrence's insistence not to publish The Trespasser see in Letters, i, his letters to Sydney Pawling, 18 October 1910, pp. 184-5 (p. 184); to Frederick Atkinson, 11 February 1911, pp. 229-30, and 15 March 1911, pp. 240-1 (p. 240); to Ada Lawrence, 17 February 1911, pp. 230-1 (p. 231); and to Martin Secker, 12 June 1911, pp. 275-6 (p. 276).
249. For Lawrence's criticism of his art of writing in The White Peacock see in Letters, i, his letters to Blanche Jennings, 15 April 1908, pp. 43-5 (p. 44), and 15 June 1908, pp. 54-6 (p. 55); and in The Trespasser see in *op cit.*, his letters to Frederick Atkinson, 11 February 1911, pp. 229-30 (p. 229); and to Edward Garnett, 17 December 1911, p. 337.
250. Personal Record, p. 82.
251. Letter to Blanche Jennings, 11 November 1908, in Letters, i, pp. 91-2 (p. 92).
252. Letter to Helen Corke, 1 June 1910, in Letters, i, pp. 161-2.
253. Letter to Blanche Jennings, 15 June 1908, in Letters, i, pp. 54-6 (p. 55).
254. Ibid., pp. 55-6.

255. Letter to Blanche Jennings, 4 November 1908, in Letters, i, pp. 87-9 (p. 89).
256. Letter to Frederick Atkinson, 24 June 1910, in Letters, i, pp. 166-7 (p. 167).
257. Letter to Edward Garnett, 21 January 1912, in Letters, i, pp. 353-4 (p. 353).
258. Letter to Louie Burrows, 3 November 1911, in Letters, i, pp. 321-2 (p. 321).
259. Letter to Arthur McLeod, [8 February 1913], in Letters, i, p. 513.
260. Letter to Edward Garnett, 21 January 1912, in Letters, i, pp. 353-4 (p. 353).
261. Letter to Edward Garnett, 17 December 1912, in Letters, i, p. 337.
262. Letter to Edmund Garnett, 21 January 1912, in Letters, i, pp. 353-4 (p. 353).
263. Letter to Blanche Jennings, 17 July 1908, in Letters, i, pp. 61-4 (p. 61).
264. Letter to Blanche Jennings, 30 July [-3 August 1908], in Letters, i, pp. 65-9 (p. 69).
265. Ada Lawrence, article, Everyman, 14 May 1931:505.
266. Personal Record, p. 214.
267. Ibid.
268. Ibid., p. 89.
269. Letter to Gordon Campbell, [3? March 1915], in Letters, ii, pp. 300-3 (p. 302).
270. D. H. Lawrence, 'Mushrooms' (see John Worthen, Early Years, p. vii).

PART TWO

CHAPTER THREE

THE ARTIST'S EXILE AND DETACHMENT IN THE WHITE PEACOCK

1. THE ARTIST AT WORK

Although many of Lawrence's early autobiographical figures are obviously artistic, it is difficult to consider them artists as such. If by 'artist' we mean someone professing and practising an imaginative art either as a vocational commitment, or as a means of living, then Lawrence's initial fictional *alter egos* hardly meet the criteria to allow them to be called artists. Almost none of the artistic figures in the stories Lawrence wrote from 1906 to 1913 practises one of the fine arts as a professional. But the best representative of these early artistic, but not artist characters, is the narrator-character Cyril Beardsall in The White Peacock.

There are some cases in this novel which indicate that Cyril's interests in and connections with art are versatile. He talks 'a great deal of poetry' (WP 59), recites verses (WP 224), enjoys visiting picture galleries, and prefers certain painters such as the Impressionist Arthur Melville (WP 247-8); has very fine tastes in music: discusses Strauss and Debussy (WP 275), and attends a performance of 'Carmen' (WP 248), but considers as 'rather vulgar, and very tiresome' open air concerts given by the pierrots (WP 247).

But Cyril is more than a connoisseur. Occasionally he is also something of a creative artist; he writes verses and also tries to publish them. In the opening chapter 'The People of Nethermere' Emily asks him during a walk:

'Have you brought me those verses of yours?'

'No-I'm so sorry - I've forgotten them again. As a matter of fact, I've sent them away.'

'But you promised me.'

'You know what my promises are. I'm as irresponsible as a puff of wind.'

She frowned with impatience and her disappointment was greater than necessary. When I left her at the corner of the lane I felt a sting of her deep reproach in my mind. I always felt the reproach when she had gone. (WP 5-6)

This is the only instance of any mention of Cyril's writing. Throughout the novel he is more attached to the brush rather than the pen. If no one except Emily seems to know anything about his poem, there is hardly anyone who is unaware of his painting. If nothing is said about where and when he writes, he sketches quite at ease in the presence of others.¹ It is hardly known how good a poet he is, but as a painter he is accepted as tutor: Emily's siblings, who enjoy painting, 'claim' Cyril's help when he visits the farm (WP 87). Nothing is said about what he himself thinks of his ability to write, yet he seems very confident of his talent to paint,² and of the high quality of his work. He gives to George and Meg alone several large water-colours as a wedding present (WP 239).

Likewise, if the novel makes no mention of what Cyril's poems are about, a rather detailed description of four of his large paintings reveal that as a painter he is particularly interested in depicting his native landscape: 'They were drawings among the waters and the fields of the Mill, grey rain and twilight, morning with the sun pouring gold into the mist, and the suspense of a midsummer moon upon the pond' (WP 239).

Important as Cyril's connections with art - either as admirer or as poet and painter - are to show his artistic predispositions, still they do not make for enough evidence to give him the status of an artist. One can suggest various reasons why Cyril, like many other early autobiographical Lawrentian figures, is not depicted essentially as a creative artist, and above all, not as a writer. The unencouraging and unsympathetic attitude of his family members and friends towards his early attempts to write, as well as his reluctance to have others identify some of his characters as his own *alter egos* certainly were among such reasons. Moreover, Cyril's artistic potential was not made the main trait of his character because, as will be explained later in this chapter, Lawrence did not intend to fictionalise through this major fictional figure his own vital interests in art as a young man, but some of his early life-experiences and tensions.

The discrepancy between Lawrence's passionate attachment to art as a young man and Cyril's amateurishness has eclipsed somehow the character's artistic nature. All the same, Cyril is not less *artistic* because Lawrence made him an *artiste*, but not an *artist*. Nor is he for that reason a surrogate artistic image and 'a stilted portrait'³ of Lawrence as a youth.

Cyril's artistic nature becomes more apparent if the character and the narrator in him are seen as complementary to each other. He is crucially important both as a character and as a storyteller. Yet it is mostly in the function of the narrator that Lawrence's initial major *alter ego* displays his essentially artistic dispositions.

2. CYRIL'S ARTISTIC INTUITION AS A STORYTELLER

It is widely held that as a narrator Cyril performs more or less like his nineteenth-century predecessors.⁴ John Worthen, for instance, argues that Cyril's role 'is entirely to comment, and (like so many heroes with their roots in the 1890s) to feel sensitively and sympathetically'.⁵ In most cases, though, Cyril's comments are considered 'wry' because as a narrator he is usually labelled an 'observer',⁶ 'remaining on the sidelines'.⁷ In the words of a commentator, as a storyteller Cyril is so much 'detached' and uninvolved in what goes on that he 'plays hardly any part in the lives of those around him'.⁸

Justifiable as some of these remarks about Cyril's 'inertia' in isolated cases are, however, this narrator is hardly as inactive as he appears, or as he is usually taken to be. Cyril's apparent indolence as a storyteller is somehow deceptive. Far from an obvious indicator of his 'undoubted' failure as a traditional witness-narrator, it points to his not-as-yet-fully-acknowledged nature as a modern conception.

Michael Black is perhaps the only critic who has recently attempted to throw some light into the 'modernity' of the narrator Cyril.⁹ Black selects some scenes from the early chapters in The White Peacock to show how George and Lettie 'come to a half-consciousness of each other which has a kind of electricity'.¹⁰ What Lawrence wants to catch when these two characters talk to each other, argues the critic, is spontaneous

reaction below the level of thought; something which is realised neither through the use of notations for reflections - such as 'when he said this, she thought that' - nor through their use for reaction caught as a conscious thing. Thus, in the chapter 'Dangling the Apple', Lettie is playing the piano when George comes in:

He asked her why she didn't play something with a tune in it, and this caused her to turn round in her chair to give him a withering answer. His appearance, however, scattered her words like startled birds....Lettie was somewhat taken aback by the sight of him standing with legs apart, dressed in dirty leggings and boots, and breeches torn at the knee, naked at the breast and arms.

'Why don't you play something with a tune in it?' he repeated, rubbing the towel over his shoulders beneath the shirt.

'A tune!' she echoed, watching the swelling of his arms as he moved them, and the rise and fall of his breasts, wonderfully solid and white. Then having curiously examined the sudden meeting of the sun-hot skin with the white flesh in his throat, her eyes met his, and she turned again to the piano, while the colour grew in her ears, mercifully sheltered by a profusion of bright curls.

'What shall I play?' she asked, fingering the keys somewhat confusedly.

(WP 14)

The Cyril voice in a scene like this when he is present but not a participant in the conversation, or in others when he is absent even physically sounds somehow incongruous. This 'superficial anomaly', however, becomes less anomalous considering that Cyril 'is recognisably a Lawrence-persona and is taken to speak for his essentially unconcealed creator'.¹¹ It is through Cyril that Lawrence began to capture for the first time the sensations, or as Michael Black calls them, 'the fugitive internal movements'¹² experienced by his characters. The exchange between George and Lettie, for instance, is 'thrilling', 'like a fluctuating electric current'.¹³

In other cases Lawrence succeeds in showing how protagonists come to half-consciousness of one another not only through Cyril's overt statements. When George saw for the first time Maurice Grieffenhagen's 'Idyll' he could not help exclaiming: 'There!'

'What of it?' she [i.e. Lettie] asked, gradually flushing. She remembered her own enthusiasm over the picture.

'Wouldn't it be fine?' he exclaimed, looking at her with glowing eyes, his teeth showing white in a smile that was not amusement.

'What?' she asked, dropping her head in confusion.

'That - a girl like that - half afraid - and passion!' He lit up curiously. (WP 29)

It is through George's sudden exclamation ('There!'), his vague questions ('Wouldn't it be fine?' and 'But don't you like it'), as well as his equally vague and broken answers ('That - a girl like that - half afraid - and passion!', 'But....it would be - rather -' (WP 29), 'But I shouldn't -....I don't know whether I should like any girl I know to -', and 'No - but -') that Cyril conveys what the young farmer is going through under the impact of the painting. George lacks the words to express what he feels, but this is not said plainly by Cyril. Had the narrator remarked something like 'George could not express himself', for instance, the scene would have lost much of its originality and effect.

Even in this conversation, however, the narrator is not 'absent' altogether. Cyril is not wordy here as he is sometimes elsewhere in the novel, but his few remarks such as 'glowing eyes', 'a smile that was not amusement', and 'He lit up curiously' make his presence felt strongly. Moreover, the narrator's proximity in this scene is also evident in the careful notations of George's and Lettie's physical movements:¹⁴

He glanced at her bosom and shivered.

'Are you studying just how to play the part?' she asked.

'No - but -' - he tried to look at her, but failed. He shrank, laughing, and dropped his head.

'What?' she asked, with vibrant curiosity.

Having become a few degrees calmer, he looked up at her now, his eyes wide and vivid, with a declaration that made her shrink back as if flame had leaped towards her face. She bent down her head, and picked at her dress.

'Didn't you know the picture before?' she said, in a low, toneless voice.

He shut his eyes, and shrank with shame....

Their eyes met in the briefest flash of a glance, then both turned their faces aside. Thus averted one from the other, they made talk. (WP 29-30)

The two young people's movements are as 'strange' as their speech. They are unnatural both in what they do and say. They speak to each other but convey nothing comprehensible. Their agitation when they talk parallels their agitated movements. Incomplete questions and 'buts' shrink their speech just as the word 'shrink' - mentioned at least four times in few lines - and other words of the same meaning are inseparable from whatever they do. It is through the characters' unnaturalness of speech and movement, as well as through his own comments, that Cyril records and

reports how the protagonists' consciousness is conceived, and how they come to a gradual consciousness of each other when they experience 'thrilling' sensations.

The multiplicity of the narrative devices which Cyril employs to uncover what the characters think or feel, either half-consciously or consciously, shows that as a narrator he is not an outsider who remains on the sidelines.¹⁵ Likewise, the access he has to the protagonists' inner world reveals that he is hardly an 'observer'¹⁶ who makes 'wry' comments.¹⁷ Cyril is not the narrator of the characters' outer appearances but of their 'inside' world. As a storyteller Cyril makes his presence felt with a subtlety which is not normally expected from the narrator of a writer's first novel.

Above all, the fact that Cyril is aware of the characters' sensitivity at such a 'basic intuitional level', and of what they think or feel when they undergo these 'electrical moments', is indicative of the artistic sensitivity of this early Lawrentian figure. If narrating is an art on its own, then the novel offers enough evidence to conclude that Cyril is a gifted storyteller, an artist who employs the word skilfully enough to capture and convey the most intricate, embryonic and intimate thoughts and feelings of himself and of other characters.

The failure to notice Cyril's sophisticated presence in the narrative is probably one of the reasons why his sensitivity and intuitive power as a storyteller have often remained unacknowledged. Under these conditions it is not surprising that while many commentators have approached Cyril as an artist, not many have seen what makes him essentially so.

3. THE ARTIST AND NATURE

3.1 Happy Nature

Cyril's artistry as a narrator-character is felt particularly in the important place nature claims in the narrative of The White Peacock. It is not accidental that nature is brought so much into focus by the first Lawrentian *alter ego*. Lawrence's lifelong attachment

and delicate response to nature is well-known. And Cyril epitomises such an affinity, perhaps, better than any other Lawrentian figure, autobiographical or otherwise.

Cyril's frequent descriptions of the scenery indicate not only that he is very much attached to his native landscape, but also that he is a poet-painter at heart. The narrator's depiction of nature in several passages is poetic enough to suggest that Lawrence's first major artist is something of a romanticist. In his narrative nature comes vividly alive. This is evident particularly in the opening chapter of the book in which Cyril describes his returning home after he left Emily at the corner of the lane:

I ran over the little bright brook that came from the weedy, bottom pond. The stepping-stones were white in the sun, and the water slid sleepily among them. One or two butterflies, indistinguishable against the blue sky, trifled from flower to flower and led me up the hill. Across the field where the hot sunshine stood as in a bowl, and I was entering the caverns of the wood, where the oaks bowed over and saved us a grateful shade. Within, everything was so still and cool that my steps hung heavily along the path. The bracken held out arms to me, and the bosom of the wood was full of sweetness, but I journeyed on spurred by the attacks of an army of flies which kept up a guerrilla warfare round my head till I had passed the black rhododendron bushes in the garden, where they left me, scenting no doubt Rebecca's pots of vinegar and sugar.

(WP 6)

It is not accidental that Cyril communes with the brook, two butterflies, the oaks and the flies directly after the talk he has with Emily about his poetry writing. If Cyril's verse remains something of a mystery to the end of the book, a passage like this one is the nearest a reader can get to the kind of poetry the narrator may have composed or liked most. Cyril's depiction of the landscape in the present scene is not that of an outsider. Nor is he an intruder. On the contrary, he feels he is very much welcomed by insects and plants alike. The butterflies 'led me up the hill', the bracken 'held out arms to me', and the bosom of the wood 'was full of sweetness'. Far from being disturbed by the 'attacks' of 'an army of flies', Cyril enjoys their company. The flies escort him as joyfully as the butterflies, and that he is happy with them is obvious from the humorous tone employed to report their 'guerrilla warfare round my head'.

It is not surprising that Emily, who seems to be the only reader of Cyril's poems, is also aware more than anyone else in the novel of his vivid response to nature. One of her letters to him quoted in the chapter 'The First Pages of Several Romances' reads:

'As I go to school by Old Brayford village in the morning the birds are thrilling wonderfully and everything seems stirring. Very likely there will be a set-back, and after that spring will come in truth.

'When shall you come and see me? I cannot think of a spring without you....'
(WP 261)

Apparently Emily too is sensitive to nature. She notices that 'the birds are thrilling wonderfully' and that 'everything seems stirring'. Nevertheless, she is unable to go beyond recording. Emily enjoys what she sees, hears and smells, yet is still an outsider, and her language is commonplace.

Unlike Emily, Cyril becomes part of the landscape he describes. He does more than simply report what he perceives through his senses. He appreciates the nature around him, and makes himself the centre of its attention. Hence Cyril's relationship with nature and his response to it are essentially different from Emily's. And she is very much aware of her 'deficiency'. Only through Cyril can she commune with nature. It is for this reason that she is particularly anxious to meet him in spring. Her remark 'I cannot think of a spring without you' is a sincere plea she addresses as much to Cyril the poet as to Cyril the lover. To Emily spring is not spring unless Cyril conveys to her its lively spirit and beauty.

The narrator finds nature attractive not only in spring. To him, autumn is an equally enchanting season. He loves September 'best of all the months' not simply because it is the month of his birth, but also because during that period of the year there is 'no heat, no hurry, no thirst and weariness in corn harvest as there is in the hay' (WP 58). The September passage is probably the best epitome of the poetic vein apparent in most of what Lawrence wrote about nature in his early years. It also unveils what Lawrence inherited from the Romantic poets, and particularly from Richard Jefferies: the inclination to depict characters as closely linked with the circumambient universe.¹⁸

Unlike the Romantics and Jefferies, however, Lawrence was not a nature-worshiper as such. Lawrence makes the man-nature relationship a central theme in The White Peacock to shed more light upon the narrator as an artist figure. Cyril's ability to read the joyous and sad aspects of nature, and his response to them, are probably the best indicators of his artistic potential.

3.2 The Versatile Connotations of Cyril's Gloomy Landscape: Nostalgia, Impact of Industrialism, Religious Quest

Although nature's pivotal presence in The White Peacock has been widely acknowledged, more needs to be done to explore its function/s. The fact that Lawrence made an East Midland valley the scene of the first novel is a clear indication of his attachment for his birth-place. But the landscape in the book is hardly a replica of the actual place. Nor did Lawrence depict it simply out of the love and nostalgia he felt for it when he was no longer living there.

It has been suggested that landscape in the novel indicates how much Lawrence concerned himself with the damaging impact of industrialism in the East Midlands by the beginning of the twentieth century. To Marko Modiano, the general breakdown in human interaction in The White Peacock is a direct consequence of the destruction of the rural community in the wake of growing industrialisation;¹⁹ whereas Colin Milton argues that the long-established rural community in this novel is disintegrating because of the discovery by the local squire that selling rabbits in nearby industrial Nottingham is easier and more profitable than farming.²⁰

Apparently, even by the beginning of his writing career Lawrence was unhappy with the unpleasant effects of industrialisation in rural England, and traces of his anxiety are recognisable also in The White Peacock. All the same, concerned as he was even by then that industrialism was spoiling the beauty of what he would call later in his life, 'the country of my heart',²¹ he did not make such a concern central in his first novel.²² After all, the book is a work of fiction and not a 'political document';²³ it deals 'only tangentially' with the coal-mining region and the working-class.²⁴

Lawrence was indeed somehow 'elusive' about the social background of his *alter ego* Cyril. But this is hardly the case with the depiction of the places of his youth. Industrialism does not seem to pose any immediate threat to Nethermere. In fact its landscape is often described as being somehow idyllic. And it could have hardly been otherwise. As Lawrence put it in the 1929 essay 'Nottingham and the Mining Countryside':

To me, as a child and a young man, it was still the old England of the forest and agricultural past; there were no motor-cars, the mines were, in a sense, an accident in the landscape, and Robin Hood and his merry men were not very far away.²⁵

Enid Hilton, who was born eleven years after Lawrence, would echo more or less the same view almost half a century later:

The country surrounding our small town was peaceful and beautiful.²⁶ The fields, farms, and woods that we walked in around Eastwood told of the old rural England. The results of the Industrial Revolution were everywhere, but in these Midland districts they were still partly hidden.²⁷

Industrialism might not have cast a threatening shadow over young Lawrence's landscape and for that matter over Cyril's, yet Nethermere is not as idyllic a place as the country surrounding Eastwood which both Lawrence and his contemporaries claimed it was at least during their early years. The 'discrepancy' seems like an enigma considering that the narrator in The White Peacock hardly offers any clear cause-and-effect explanation why inertia haunts Nethermere from start to finish. The place seems to be under a spell, a curse, whose source is never overtly identified. One may argue that the rabbits in particular are the main agents of destruction, that they engender the collapse of the rural community. But as will be shown shortly afterwards in the present chapter, although the rabbits do contribute in the collapse of the farming community, the process itself does not start with them. Nethermere was already a lifeless place before the rabbits began to destroy the farmers' crops. The valley is still, inert, dead by itself; something which the narrator accentuates from the first.

Some commentators hold that the novel's lifeless landscape is, among other things, an indicator of Lawrence's own religious concerns, his preoccupation with the revival

of the pagan past, or rather with the Druidic revivification of Christian idealism.²⁸ Those in favour of this interpretation pay particular attention to the discussion Cyril and some characters have on the snowdrops that stand for '[s]omething out of an old religion' that they have 'lost' and 'need' (WP 129).

The various interpretations of the functions of the landscape in The White Peacock indicate that Lawrence used it for manifold purposes. Likewise, they show how ambitious a writer he was from the first. At times, however, such ambition could not match his writing experience, or rather was a manifestation of his lack of experience. In terms of its thematic concerns The White Peacock is a very compressed novel, but Lawrence fails somehow to deal here thoroughly with any of the many questions tackled. Moreover, the multiple nuances he attached to some of the special themes make for a sense of ambiguity which is felt sometimes in the novel. And this is evident, perhaps more than in anything else, in the versatile connotations of landscape.

3.3 Hardy: More than an Influence

Some critics have traced in Lawrence's handling of landscape parallels with, and influences of the Pre-Raphaelites, Richard Jefferies, and Emily Brontë.²⁹ Ruskin's impact on Lawrence's treatment of the nature theme has also been acknowledged. From the first Lawrence displayed much of Ruskin's interest in the eye and truth to nature. But the main influence, all agree, is Hardy. The White Peacock, observes J. R. Watson, 'lacks the dark centre of Hardy's novel, but in many ways the landscape performs a similar function'.³⁰

Probably, Lawrence's acquaintance with Hardy began through Richard Garnett's International Library of Famous Literature in 1901 or 1902. Hardy remained one of Lawrence's favourite writers not only during the years when he was engaged in writing The White Peacock but throughout his life. It was because of such admiration that Lawrence made Hardy's *oeuvre* the subject of his longest literary study.

Hardy's influence in The White Peacock is not felt in Lawrence's handling of nature only;³¹ it is hard to say which aspect of Hardy's art Lawrence admired most by the

beginning of his literary career. Yet the fact that he was delighted to know that some of the descriptions of nature in his first novel were considered equal to those of Hardy's Tess of the D'Urbervilles³² indicates how highly Lawrence thought of the Hardy landscape.

It is generally accepted that at this early stage in his creative writing Lawrence's most obvious link with Hardy, and for that matter with the writers of the Romantic movement, is seen in his extensive use of the pathetic fallacy as a means of depicting how landscape affects characters.³³ But while it is worthwhile to see this romantic device as a bridge between Lawrence's landscape as it appears in The White Peacock and that of the other writers before him, it has hardly been noticed that from the first Lawrence's handling of the pathetic fallacy was essentially original, not traditional. It is in The White Peacock, and not in his later novels as Alastair Niven suggests, that Lawrence moved away from Hardy's influence.³⁴ Richard Aldington was of the opinion that at the first attempt Lawrence surpassed his master Thomas Hardy, in just such passages where Hardy was thought to be inimitable,³⁵ but he does not say where and how Lawrence excelled Hardy.

It would be wiser, perhaps, to see the distinction between Lawrence's and Hardy's handling of landscape in terms of innovation rather than of excelling. As Stephen Miko puts it:

What Lawrence seizes upon in Hardy are the moments of vital response to nature; but, unlike Hardy, he does not reveal them as delusions or pastoral enticements which men foolishly pursue. In The White Peacock these gloomy notes about fate and life mainly reflect a groping toward an attitude which can accept natural meaning without reducing it to any of its pretty or sentimentally pastoral forms, an attitude which implies a search for coherent relations instead of tragic or alienated postures.³⁶

The 'gloomy notes' apparent in the vital interrelationship between nature and characters, or as Julian Moynahan puts it, the 'intimate connection between the outer world of nature and the inner world of the individual'³⁷ in The White Peacock has been addressed and acknowledged by several commentators.³⁸ Yet little attention has been paid to find out to what extent such 'gloomy notes' are indicative of the narrator's

ontological state, and what is more important, what function this narrator-character plays in bringing landscape and characters together. And even in these few cases when his role is assessed, the conclusion is more or less the same: Cyril's handling of the essentially inert landscape, of the interaction between himself and nature, as well as of the interrelationship between characters and landscape, is frequently seen as faulty.³⁹ On the other hand, Cyril's 'egoistic' intentions in the handling of the landscape have either been ignored or seen as proof of his weakness to draw attention only to himself, 'without impressing us of the force or coherence of his presence'.⁴⁰

The interaction between the storyteller and the landscape lies at the heart of the narrative in The White Peacock. The study of this interrelationship is crucial to understand Cyril's artistic alienation and subsequent departure from the native valley.

3.4 The Cyril-Nature Relationship and the Exile Theme in the Early Versions of *The White Peacock*

Taking for granted that as a narrator as well as a character Cyril is an 'outsider', an 'observer',⁴¹ who remains 'on the sidelines',⁴² ineffectually involved in the action,⁴³ the general belief is that the lifeless landscape reflects first and foremost the inertness of some characters such as George and Lettie. True as this conclusion is to a large extent, however, this inert landscape is indicative primarily of Cyril's inertia. The reason why this is not seen at the first glance is that as a narrator Cyril chooses to confess as little as possible about himself.

Cyril is not less inert than the other protagonists. What is special about his inactivity, though, is that it is not projected as clearly as that of George. Moreover, unlike George's, Cyril's inertia does not seem to be the result of the impact the lifeless landscape has on him. This apparent 'dissociation' of Cyril's inertia with the inert landscape makes his departure from Nethermere sound somehow mysterious and unjustified.

The mystery that shrouds Cyril's movements is one of the weak points of the novel as a whole. It is a mystery that has eclipsed somehow one of Cyril's most fundamental decisions: his self-exile. A closer look at the narrative, though, indicates that the exile theme is central in The White Peacock from the start. To be more precise, the theme seems to have been a major preoccupation for Lawrence from the first when he began the initial version of 'Laetitia'. Such an early presence is indicative of the importance Lawrence attached to this theme. On the other hand, the twists and turns the exile theme went through in various versions of the novel imply that Lawrence found its treatment far from easy.

In the surviving fragments of 'Laetitia' the exile theme figures mostly as economic emigration. In the second fragment, for instance, Emily tells Cyril that George intends to go away to Canada because he is 'dreadfully disappointed' with the farm. To George, 'this place will never pay as things are'.⁴⁴ In the chapter 'By Dividing we Conquer' - Chapter XVIII of 'Laetitia' - Cyril describes what a bleak figure Strelley Mill makes a month after the sale. The farm stands empty, the windows are dead, its kitchen deserted. Without the Worthingtons, as the Saxtons were initially called, the place is lifeless. After their departure nothing is the same for Cyril: 'Everything has suffered change - everywhere is a subtle alteration.'⁴⁵

It is difficult to say how Cyril felt towards his native valley throughout the first and the second versions of 'Laetitia'. The impression one gets from the surviving chapter, however, is that, devastated by the Worthingtons' departure, Cyril's attitude towards his home changes dramatically. For Cyril, Nethermere is no longer the happy place it seems to have been before. It is a haunting experience, and Cyril cannot help thinking that:

each has deceived me; I thought I knew them all with that sure acquaintance which is content; but they have deceived me. I am a stranger in the valley that has cradled me and brought me to manhood. I should not feel so foreign on the fabled Rhine, or in the dreaded cities of the United States, as here, at home, where every bush has been the confident friend of my boyhood, and is no longer my confident friend.⁴⁶

As a direct consequence of the Worthingtons' departure Cyril feels an alien not only at Strelley Mill and in Nethermere, but also in his own house: 'even our house in which I am as a living seed inside its seedbox is changed.' His 'well-known friend' has become such a 'still' place.

Obviously, in this early version of the novel Lawrence intended the Worthingtons' emigration as a turning point in Cyril's life. The regrettable state he is in after his farming friends' leaving of Nethermere indicates how happy this early Cyril used to be throughout his boyhood and youth. On the other hand, it also shows how passive a person this happy young man was. This narrator-character could have hardly exerted any influence on his friends. On the contrary, he seems to have existed only through them and because of them. And now that they are gone he sees himself as a cipher.

The depressed Cyril considers two options to overcome the haunting spiritual impasse he is in: either find 'a laughing wife' who could make the deserted place lively again:

or I shall tear myself away too, and go out where strangeness is pleasure, not pain - take up some dusty work, or give myself away to some enthusiasm. I do not know. Where I go my mother must go; - but she is brave; but she is also old - I do not know.⁴⁷

These two options do not make Cyril an active man. They are expressions of his incompetence to face life alone. He needs a wife and his mother to support him in life as an invalid needs crutches to walk. The fact that he has some 'work' seems to imply that Cyril has already attempted writing or painting. But his going abroad is hardly motivated by any intention to pursue his artistic vocation as such. On the contrary, he intends to take up some unfinished work, or give himself away to some enthusiasm in an effort to forget his loneliness and alienation from Nethermere. Cyril experiences this new ontological state not as a self-conscious artist but as someone left behind abandoned and forsaken.

Marriage, departure from the native valley, and keeping himself busy are 'exiles' of imposition rather than of choice; of doom rather than of hope. They offer Cyril a momentary escape but not a permanent solution. Cyril himself seems to be aware of

the inefficacy of such options. This is the reason why he remains so undecided; something which is evident from the repetition of 'I do not know'.

Cyril's indecisiveness as to what to do and where to go in the wake of his painful but artificial estrangement from Nethermere and home may reflect and parallel Lawrence's own indecision and difficulties about how to handle the exile theme in the first two versions of 'Laetitia'. Cyril retained this kind of inertness and indecision as long as Lawrence the student was still in daily contact with his native valley. It is possible that Lawrence found it hard to handle Cyril's exile satisfactorily as long as his own ties with Eastwood were still so strong, and his world consisted mainly of it. This is not to say that The White Peacock should be read as Lawrence's autobiography, but that the novel reflects considerably how the young writer himself felt, and what he was unable to perceive during those early years. Throughout the years Lawrence the student was engaged in writing the first novel, to quote a commentator, 'he had no claim to believe that his departure from Nottinghamshire as a home would be irrevocable'.⁴⁸

True, Lawrence's departure from Nottinghamshire was not irrevocable during the university years. In fact it is impossible to talk of Lawrence's 'final' departure from the country of his heart at any time throughout his whole life. Nevertheless, his going to Croydon in 1908 marked a turning point. The move itself was not an exile, although in many respects it was Lawrence's first important step towards it. At the beginning Lawrence found the severance from his family and Eastwood friends a dreadful experience. But the phase of 'acute homesickness', reports Jessie Chambers, soon wore off.⁴⁹ Lawrence's world began to expand as never before. It was in Croydon and in nearby London that he could enjoy for the first time a new kind of freedom and independence. Only there and then he became aware, more than ever before, of the narrowness of the world of his early years. At the age of twenty-three Lawrence could finally realise how important it was for him as an artist to leave his birth-place.

It is not accidental, perhaps that shortly after his move to Croydon Lawrence altered almost completely his initial conception of the emigration theme in 'Laetitia'.

Lawrence's decision to make Lettie marry Leslie instead of George⁵⁰ meant that Cyril's sister and his farming friend would no longer go to Canada as economic emigrants. As a consequence, Cyril would not be left without company in Nethermere. Lack of friends would no longer be a reason for him to feel a stranger in his native valley. Nor would it serve him as the main pretext to consider his departure from Nethermere.

The changes Lawrence introduced in the novel in Croydon were so radical - by 1 November 1909 he had 're-written' and altered 'much' of it, and had added 'a third part'⁵¹ - that made it in fact a completely different work from 'Laetitia'. The narrator's new attitude towards the valley is probably the most important indicator of the work's metamorphosis. In the third version - which is now significantly rechristened 'Nethermere' - Lawrence's new handling of the storyteller-landscape relationship is conspicuous from the start. In the first paragraph of the opening chapter Cyril contemplates a very inert mill-pond:

I stood watching the shadowy fish slide through the gloom of the mill-pond. They were grey descendants of the silvery things that had darted away from the monks, in the young days when the valley was lusty. The whole place was gathered in the musing of old age. The thick-piled trees on the far shore were too dark and sober to dally with the sun, the reeds stood crowded and motionless. Not even a little wind flickered the willows of the islets. The water lay softly, intensely still. Only the thin stream falling through the mill-race murmured to itself of the tumult of life which had once quickened the valley.

(WP 1)

This haunting image of the lifeless landscape the storyteller perceives in the final version of the novel echoes the inert nature he contemplates in the first surviving fragment of 'Laetitia': 'The sound of the dropping sluice is different. When the fishes glide in the pond, their motion has another meaning; and it calls up a startled ghost of the feeling it used to produce.'⁵² In spite of the similarities, though, the two passages are still essentially different. Cyril does not mention the Strelley Mill farm in the opening paragraph of the novel's final version. By now he concerns himself mainly with the mill-pond, which is a much more inert place than in 'Laetitia'. Its fish are 'shadowy'. They glide neither in nor out of the pond. They seem to have been there for a long time doomed to slide through its 'gloom'.

The novel's opening paragraph indicates clearly Lawrence's tendency to employ the landscape symbolically after his moving to Croydon. The lifeless pond becomes the epitome of a whole inert valley. It is an apocalyptic landscape with no sign that the 'tumult of life' would ever quicken it again. This new development reflects the impact Jefferies's handling of the nature theme, and particularly his ability to see through nature into the life of things and characters,⁵³ had on Lawrence when he was writing 'Nethermere' I from Autumn 1908 to November 1909. It was during that period that Lawrence became 'very fond of Jefferies'.⁵⁴ At this stage, however, Lawrence was also influenced by some weak points apparent in Jefferies's prose such as its self-conscious significance and rhetoric.⁵⁵

At the outset of The White Peacock the narrator pays particular attention to the fact that the mill-pond is a ghostly version of what it used to be in the past, but he hardly offers any explanation how and why the former lively Nethermere has turned into such a lifeless place. Nor does he say when he himself began to notice its inertness for the first time. This new Cyril is remarkably aware that his birth-place is completely void of life, but nothing is said how he comes to realise so much so early.

Obviously, the opening paragraph of The White Peacock raises many questions about the narrator-nature relationship and leaves them unanswered. The only thing that can hardly be disputed, however, is that Cyril's depiction of such a gloomy landscape is a significant expression of his alienation from the valley.

3.5 The Narrator's Preliminary Efforts to Make Characters Realise Inertia in the Landscape and in Themselves

On the basis of the initial chapter it is hard to say what is more inert in The White Peacock: landscape or characters. Likewise, it is difficult to assert whether the people are so lifeless because of the valley, or whether the valley looks so dreary because of its people. What is obvious, however, is that, although an inert figure himself, only the narrator-character Cyril is aware of how lifeless nature and people alike are.

Moreover, it is through Cyril that the characters' attention is initially drawn to the lack of life in Nethermere. This constitutes the first step towards the realisation of their own inertness.

Cyril's efforts to make the characters aware of the inertness both in nature and in themselves is obvious from the start. But so are the difficulties he would face in his endeavours to accomplish this goal. Engrossed in the contemplation of the lifelessness of the mill-pond, Cyril does not notice that he is no longer alone:

I was almost startled into the water from my perch on the alder roots by a voice saying:

'Well, what is there to look at?' My friend was a young farmer, stoutly built, brown eyed, with a naturally fair skin burned dark and freckled in patches. He laughed, seeing me start, and looked down at me with lazy curiosity.

'I was thinking the place seemed old, brooding over its past.'

He looked at me with lazy indulgent smile, and lay down on his back on the bank, saying:

'It's all right for a doss - here.'

'Your life is nothing else but a doss. I shall laugh when somebody jerks you awake,' I replied.

He smiled comfortably and put his hands over his eyes because of the light:

'Why shall you laugh?' he drawled.

'Because you'll be amusing,' said I. (WP 1)

Cyril's 'startling' suggests that he hardly expects to encounter any sign of life in the lifeless mill-pond and around it. For a moment it seems as if with his coming George puts an end to Cyril's gloomy contemplation. George's presence, however, does not divert the narrator's attention from his train of thought. On the contrary, the 'intrusion' of the young farmer offers Cyril a chance to voice the meditations recorded in the opening paragraph. Their conversation starts with what is obviously a rhetorical question: 'Well, what is there to look at?' asks George. This question-statement is so revealing about George's present ontological state. The pond does not suggest to the farmer what it does to Cyril. In fact, it hardly suggests to George anything at all. 'I was thinking the place seemed old, brooding over its past,' Cyril sums up what he had been thinking on his own. But George is not impressed by this remark. He does not see anything wrong or strange with the place as it is. Far from it, 'It's all right for a doss - here', he says laying down on his back on the bank of the pond.

Apparently, George is anything but a lively person. This is suggested both by his 'ghostly' appearance and the reaction to Cyril's words. He looks down at Cyril 'with lazy curiosity', and then again 'with lazy indulgent smile'. Cyril's rejoinder, 'Your life is nothing else but a doss' does not have any effect on him. He smiles 'comfortably' in his laziness and apathy. He is so inactive that even speaking seems to have become a burden for him: he drawls his words. Like the trees that cannot 'dally' with the sun because they are 'thick-piled', 'too dark and sober', George too avoids contact with it: he 'put his hands over his eyes because of the light'.

George's inertness is of a piece with that of the mill-pond and of the valley. He is the first dweller of Nethermere introduced by the storyteller, and the implication is that he epitomises the apathy of the whole farming community.

In spite of the parallel drawn on the opening page of the novel between the inertness of the valley and that of its dwellers, the narrator still differentiates between the two. The inertia of the landscape and that of the characters are fundamentally different. There is no hint at all in Cyril's gloomy description of the mill-pond that it would ever be a lively place again. The valley seems to be doomed for ever. But this is hardly the case with its inhabitants. As J. R. Watson observes, while the landscape remains in The White Peacock, its characters change.⁵⁶ The narrator predicts that even George, who is such an apathetic figure at the beginning, would change sooner or later: 'I shall laugh when somebody jerks you awake.' Cyril's belief in George's potential for growth is shared also by Lettie who sees her lover's 'physical beauty' as a 'firm bud of life' (WP 48).

Considering how much George's life changes when he begins the 'abortive' affair with Lettie, one gets the impression that she is the 'somebody' who 'jerks' him awake for the first time. Irritated by George's lack of response to 'Hoeing' - a water-colour by George Clausen - she remonstrates with him in the chapter 'A Vendor of Visions':

You are blind; you are only half-born. You are gross with good-living and heavy sleeping. You are a piano which will only play a dozen common notes. Sunset is nothing to you - it merely happens somewhere. Oh but you make me feel as if I'd like to make you suffer. If you'd ever been sick; if you'd ever been

born into a home where there was something oppressed you, and you couldn't understand; if ever you'd believed, or even doubted, you might have been a man by now. You never grow up, like bulbs which spend all summer getting fat and fleshy but never wakening the germ of a flower. (WP 28)

There is nothing new in Lettie's criticism of George's inability to be awake to the world around that we do not know already. Her long verbal attack is nothing else but a prolonged expansive version of what Cyril told George on the banks of the mill-pond: 'Your life is nothing but a doss.' It took George a long time to come to consciousness, and Lettie played an important role in the process. But she did not start it. George's awakening began during his short discussion by the pond, although at that stage the young farmer failed to make much of the narrator's words. Not that Cyril spoke much, but what he said was beyond the grasp of the unimaginative George. By then only Cyril interprets the farmer's 'doss' as a consequence and as a manifestation of the inertness of the birth-place.

His ability to perceive what neither George nor Lettie can see, the capacity to 'read' landscape in terms of the formative impact it has on characters, and the power to foresee future events shed more light on Cyril as an imaginative narrator-character. This imaginative power he displays so conspicuously from the start of the novel is the earliest strong indication that Lawrence's first major character is essentially an artist.

Later in the novel other characters begin to share Cyril's view on the lifelessness of the valley. Unlike Cyril, though, their new awareness will have nothing to do with their imagination. For George, Lettie and Emily, Nethermere does not become a lifeless place until they can see its inertness with the naked eye. Realising these unimaginative characters' coming to consciousness was probably one of the most difficult tasks an inexperienced Lawrence had to face in his early years as a writer. Under these conditions he had little choice but to contrive artificial means to make the characters realise the inertness of Nethermere as well as their own sluggishness. This is apparent particularly in the sudden introduction of the rabbits as agents of destruction.

3.6 The Catalytic Function of the Rabbit Device

Although the rabbits play a crucial role in undermining the prosperity of the long-established farming community, they do not initiate its decline. Nor are they the only agents of destruction. The narrator does not refer to them at all in the opening paragraph of the novel. When they are initially mentioned in the first chapter, apart from Mr Saxton and his wife who are somehow uneasy about the rabbits biting down the turnips, the animals give cause for concern to no one else.

For the second time rabbits are mentioned in Chapter V. Even by now, however, nothing is mentioned about the damage the rabbits cause to the crops. On the contrary, all seem unaware of any risk the vermin may pose to the farms at present or in a near future. Mr Saxton, George, Cyril and Leslie chase the rabbits vigorously not to save the crops but for fun. For them, the chase is as enjoyable an experience as the country sport of hunting. George considers the hunt also a profitable business; he makes a couple of shillings occasionally by selling the game.

As for the female characters, at this stage they too do not see the rabbits as a menace to the farming community. Moreover, Mrs Saxton, Emily and Lettie do not approve of the men's chasing of the animals. While the hunt gives Mrs Saxton cause for concern about George's health - the sport, she tells him, 'does you more harm, than the rabbits do us good' (WP 51) - Emily and Lettie are opposed to it because they are concerned for the suffering of the animals. Appalled by the three youths' merciless chasing of the rabbits, Lettie and Emily call them horrible brutes and barbarians (WP 51-2).

For the third time the rabbits are mentioned in Chapter VI. By now, however, they are not referred to briefly. Nor are they seen as outnumbered by mice and rats as in Chapter V. The vermin have increased so much recently that 'dens of rabbits' (WP 57) are said to surround the Saxtons' farm.

The reason for the sudden increase in the number of animals is that an 'evil fortune' has recently discovered to the impoverished squire of the estate that he can thrive again by encouraging the growth of the rabbits - 'those bits of furry vermin' - which he

can sell in Nottingham. The Saxtons and their fellow farmers become victims of the local squire's selfish policy. The collapse of the farming community is imminent, but the squire shows no remorse for what he is doing:

Farms were gnawed away; corn and sweet grass departed from the face of the hills; cattle grew lean, unable to eat the defiled herbage....and the country was silent, with no sound of cattle, no clink of horses, no barking of lusty dogs.

But the squire loved his rabbits. He defended them against the snares of the despairing farmers, protected them with gun and notices to quit. How he glowed with thankfulness as he saw the dishevelled hillside heave when gnawing hosts moved on!....Meanwhile, Strelley Mill began to suffer under this gangrene. It was the outpost in the wilderness. (WP 57-8)

Apparently, the changes the long-established farming community undergoes in the first section of Chapter VI make for an important watershed in the novel. The importance of such a turning point can be assessed by paying attention, firstly, to its suddenness, and secondly, to its short and long-term effects on the valley and on the farmers.

The radical transformation Nethermere undergoes in Chapter VI takes place too soon to be convincing. The preceding five chapters hardly pave the way for such a metamorphosis. None of the two episodes about the rabbits in Chapters I and V prepares us to expect that the animals could in no time have such a devastating effect on farming.

On the other hand, although rabbits seem to create havoc, they alone hardly turn the valley into a waste land. Nor is there any mass emigration of the farmers to the other parts of England or overseas. It is true that the Saxtons leave Nethermere to settle in Canada. But not all of them. George and Emily choose not to exile themselves. Although neither of the siblings inhabits Strelley Mill after their family's departure, they are not completely cut off from the valley and farming thereafter. George marries a barmaid, takes to public-house keeping and to politics, yet he still remains a farmer at heart. When his parents leave the valley he starts farming the land attached to the Ram Inn. Unlike George, Emily is not attached to farming as such. Nevertheless, the future life of this schoolmistress in England is closely linked with

farming. She marries Tom Renshaw who 'was now farming his father's farm at Papplewick' (WP 308). The farmer's daughter becomes the farmer's wife.

The fact that George and Emily live not far away from their former family farm after they get married - the Renshaws' farm is only nine miles away from the Ram Inn (WP 317), and the latter is not more than two miles away from Strelley Mill⁵⁷ - implies that, in a sense, they retain their close contact with their native valley. But not only them. Lettie too never severs her links with Nethermere completely. Only a couple of years after their marriage she and Leslie come down to inhabit Highclose in Nethermere with no apparent intention of leaving again.

This, however, does not mean that the rabbits have no impact at all on George, Emily and Lettie. The plague affects considerably their views on Nethermere. So much so that the vermin mark a watershed in these young protagonists' perception of the valley. Only after they see with a naked eye the devastation the animals cause to the farms, do those characters become aware of the lifelessness of Nethermere. The reason why they come to such an awareness later than Cyril is that, unlike him, they are unimaginative. They need the rabbits and factual proofs of their destructive powers to realise what the narrator can see with his mind's eye from the first.

Even George, perhaps the most unimaginative young character in the novel, becomes surprisingly 'wise' after Nethermere turns suddenly into a waste land. In Chapter VI - significantly entitled 'The Education of George' - he becomes almost a completely different person from the George the narrator met on the banks of the mill pond in the first chapter. Immediately after the 'gangrene' of rabbits (WP 58) threatens Nethermere, George's life ceases to be a 'doss'. For him, the valley is no longer the comfortable place it used to be throughout the first five chapters. In the wake of a row with Annable, George suffers a strange fit of depression - 'I don't care much about what happens just now' - and as a direct result of it he tells Cyril for the first time:

'I think I shall emigrate?'

'Why didn't you before?'

'Oh, I don't know. There are a lot of little comforts and interests at home that one would miss. Besides, you feel somebody in your own countryside, and you're nothing in a foreign part, I expect.'

'But you are going?'

'What is there to stop here for? The valley is all running wild and unprofitable. You've no freedom for thinking of what the other folks think of you, and everything round you keeps the same, and so you can't change yourself - because everything you look at brings up the same old feeling, and stops you from feeling fresh things. And what is there that's worth anything? - what's worth having in my life?' (WP 64-5)

This outburst seems unlikely to come from a character like George who until now has hardly shown he has such a perceptive mind, or that he can express himself so well. George is estranged from the valley for reasons that can be related more to an intellectual rather than a farmer like him. He suffers because, in his view, he is not free to be other than what others think of him. He can see clearly the stagnancy the valley is plunged into, and has no hope that anybody or anything can change there. The stagnant place seems to be doomed because nothing and nobody can challenge its inertia.

George's present picture of the valley is very much reminiscent of that depicted by the narrator at the beginning of the novel: the same stillness and motionlessness; the same lack of hope that things could change for better in the future. The similarities are so obvious that one cannot help thinking that what George says is an expanded version of Cyril's gloomy meditation in Chapter I.

Apparently, Lawrence was unhappy with the mystery shrouding the narrator's initial exceptional insight. Hence he attempted to 'explain' George's and other young characters' wisdom and alienation from the valley in a more 'rational' way by the sudden introduction of the rabbits and the devastating impact they seem to have on the farms. Moreover, Lawrence employed the vermin as a pretext to introduce the exile theme in the novel. Obviously, the rabbits were intended as an important catalyst through which Lawrence could realise the protagonists' departure from the valley.

The fact that none of the major characters, including the narrator, leaves Nethermere as a result of the vermin, however, implies that the animals alone hardly make for a convincing 'pretext' to realise the alienation theme in the book. The rabbits

are employed by Lawrence as a device which apparently does not make for any significant breakthrough in his handling of the exile theme in the book. Above all, the rabbits have no impact at all on the artistic narrator's forthcoming decision to exile himself.

3.7 Towards Exile

The narrator first expresses the wish to emigrate in Chapter IV, Part II. Even at this stage, however, this is not the wish of a self-conscious artist. Nor is it his own original idea. Impressed by the optimism with which Mr Saxton views his family's future in Canada, Cyril says to him: 'I wish I could come now' (WP 186).

As yet, though, Cyril cannot go beyond wishing. His remark is that of a youth who is at a loss; it is a wishful thought in the face of his inability to overcome his spiritual impasse. He wants to escape, but does not know how and where. Moreover, he hardly makes any serious efforts to find a way out.

The narrator's, and for that matter other protagonists' lack of initiative and unwillingness to leave Nethermere, indicate how much they were attached to their native valley. The novel is full of 'little comforts and interests' (WP 64) they enjoy in the countryside. Their attachment for the enchanting bucolic birthplace is so strong that it has somehow made it impossible for them to imagine departing from it. Such strong ties with the narrow valley have made them see with fear and scepticism the unknown world that lies beyond it. They are the children and the prisoners of their familiar microcosmos, which holds them close to itself almost like a possessive mother. They believe that they cease to exist, that they are 'nothing' (WP 64) away from their familiar countryside, even when their alienation from such a 'little world'⁵⁸ becomes so apparent.

The storyteller's and other characters' alienation from Nethermere remains pivotal also in Part III of the book. By now, however, the theme is handled very differently from the two preceding parts. Cyril and his young friends are no longer busy noticing and discussing the lifelessness of the native landscape. As in the opening chapter of the

novel, even in the first chapter of Part III, the narrator stresses that everywhere there is 'a sense of loss, and of change' (WP 237). Such a metamorphosis, however, is not brought about as a result of any 'gangrene' of rabbits as is the case in Parts I and II. At the outset of Part III there are no 'gloomy ponds' or vermin, or human agents of destruction such as the local squire and his gamekeeper. Moreover, in spite of the 'change' Nethermere is said to have undergone, there is hardly any hint to suggest that it is an inert or lifeless place as such. The stress in Part III is not that the valley is inert, but that the young protagonists either have already started to leave it or are planning to do so shortly. What the narrator and his friends have been avoiding throughout the first two parts of the novel suddenly becomes their main concern. Furthermore, by now their actual or intentional move is not dictated by the 'physical' collapse of Nethermere but because:

The long voyage in the quiet home was over; we had crossed the bright sea of our youth....It was time for us all to go, to leave the valley of Nethermere whose waters and whose woods were distilled in the essence of our veins. We were the children of the valley of Nethermere, a small nation with language and blood of our own, and to cast ourselves each one into separate exile was painful for us. (WP 237)

Although the young characters are not completely uneasy about what awaits them in exile, unlike George in Chapter VI, Part I, now they are less afraid lest away from the valley they would be 'nothing'. Above all, the above passage reveals, as Richard Aldington might have put it, the young characters' 'tender love and wistful regret for the youth's passing'.⁵⁹ It is difficult for them to part with each other and Nethermere. They will miss the joys and sorrows they have been sharing there for so long. Yet they have no choice but to disperse. As for their future prospects, they sound more or less optimistic; something which is implied by the title of the opening chapter: 'A New Start in Life'.

3.8 The Artist's Departure

Although Part III of The White Peacock starts with the announcement of everybody's departure from Nethermere, this section of the novel is devoted almost exclusively to

the narrator's exile. Moreover, the emphasis here is that from the first the exile of the narrator is not only 'separate' (WP 237) but also of a different nature from that of the other characters. The exile of Cyril's friends and sister is something of a boomerang: they leave only to return, if not exactly in the same place, at least not far from where they used to live before.⁶⁰

If by 'exile' we generally mean 'going away', then the real departure of the young characters does not consist so much in distancing themselves from former habitat and way of life as in their embarking upon a new stage in life: that of matrimony. They all get married in the end. Such exile into marriage, however, makes none of them happy. All marriages are mismatches - even that between Tom Renshaw and Emily, as it will be shown later in the present chapter - and as a consequence the characters are uneasy and unfulfilled by the end of the novel as they are throughout Parts I and II.

Only for the narrator exile becomes a positive turning point in his life. The reason why Cyril's exile results in a welcome change is that, unlike other characters', his departure is not an exile into an abortive marriage - he chooses not to marry at all - but into a new world.

Moreover, differently from other protagonists', the narrator's departure from the valley is final. True, he visits Nethermere time and again after he leaves. Yet unlike George, Emily or Lettie, he never considers settling there or somewhere in its vicinity after his initial departure.

It is worth noting that although emigration is a very common topic in Parts I and II, neither the narrator nor any protagonist mentions the word 'exile'; not even once. Likewise, the word 'exile' is not mentioned at all in the two surviving fragments of 'Laetitia', although much of the talk in them is about 'going away'. For the first time this word crops up in the opening paragraph of the initial chapter of Part III.

Shortly afterwards the narrator announces: 'In seven weeks I go' (WP 237). Considering that he is so clear regarding the timing of his departure, one may suggest that Cyril has found a job somewhere in the country. No further details are given, but the fact that the announcement is made in August suggests that, like Emily, Cyril too

has been offered a teaching post. In the second chapter of Part III Cyril remarks: 'In October I moved to London' (WP 253). As for the purpose of the move, however, Cyril continues to be as reticent as before. In the following chapter of the book more details are given about the narrator's new whereabouts: he is staying in Norwood, a place in the suburbs of London. Even by now, however, his occupation remains a mystery.

The emphasis at the beginning of Part III is not on why the narrator goes to Norwood rather than on how he feels in the new habitat. The integrity with which Cyril confesses what is most intimate to him is apparent from the early pages of The White Peacock, and this constitutes one of the most interesting aspects of the work as a whole. At this stage, however, Cyril's confession acquires new dimensions. While the narrative continues to be poetic, Cyril becomes more straightforward and more down-to-earth in what he reveals about himself and the new world. He feels now as gloomy as when he meditates on the lifeless pond on the first page of the book. Nevertheless, this new Cyril is hardly in the position of a 'deity' who knows what has gone wrong with the landscape. By now the emphasis is not that the narrator finds fault with the newly discovered world as such rather than he feels completely out of place there:

I suffered acutely the sickness of exile in Norwood. For weeks I wandered the streets of the suburb, haunted by the spirits of some part of Nethermere. As I went along the quiet roads where the lamps in yellow loneliness stood among the leafless trees of the night I would feel the feeling of the dark, wet bit of path between the wood meadow and the brooks. The spirit of that wild slope to the Mill would come upon me, and there in the suburb of London I would walk wrapt in the sense of a small wet place in the valley of Nethermere. A strange voice within me rose and called for the hill-path; again I could feel the wood waiting for me, calling and calling, and I crying for the wood, yet the space of many miles was between us. Since I left the valley of home I have not much feared any other loss. The hills of Nethermere had been my walls, and the sky of Nethermere my roof overhead. It seemed almost as if, at home, I might lift my hand to the ceiling of the valley, and touch my own beloved sky, whose familiar clouds came again and again to visit me, whose stars were constant to me, born when I was born, whose sun had been all my father to me. (WP 260)

The revelation of the relation between the narrator and his circumambient universe, of the artist's love for a particular place, is one of Lawrence's main concerns in The

White Peacock, and the Wordsworthian passage above is an epitome of his successful handling of the theme. Cyril's relatedness with the living universe is of a very complex nature; something which becomes more obvious particularly in the wake of his departure from the valley. At first glance it seems that the narrator is unhappy in Norwood because the new world he faces is not as magical as that he has left behind. He has always been attached to his native valley, and his bond with it is too strong to be snapped immediately after his departure. Moreover, Cyril's relation with Nethermere seems to have become even stronger after his exile.

But there is more than nostalgia for the valley in the narrator's pining in exile. Although he misses Nethermere, Cyril does not feel so low simply because of homesickness. He is upset in Norwood partly because the new world makes him realise for the first time the littleness and the smallness of his former universe. The narrator may well long for the Nethermere he has left behind, yet his present image of it is that of a cage: the hills of the valley 'had been my walls' and its sky a 'ceiling', 'my roof overhead' which he could have touched if he had lifted his hand. In the valley everything had been 'familiar' and 'constant' to Cyril: the wild little slope to the Mill, the woods, the sky, the clouds, the stars, the sun.

The narrator has been aware of this consistency and familiarity since he was a small child. To him, everything in Nethermere was born 'when I was born', and since then nothing has changed there. For twenty-three years Cyril has hardly come across another different world, and the contact he makes with London is bound to have a strong impact on him.

Cyril's departure from Nethermere marks not only the exile of the provincial Lawrentian artist to the world of the city, but also the forging of his attachment for this new challenging 'universe'. Cyril's initial disapproval of everything in or related to the urban world - most of the things there had 'no meaning' and 'little interest' for him (WP 261) - was bound to change: the city-hater becomes the city-lover in no time. To realise the sudden shift in Cyril's attitude towards the city Lawrence attempted to bring the urban and the rural worlds as close together as possible; something which he did

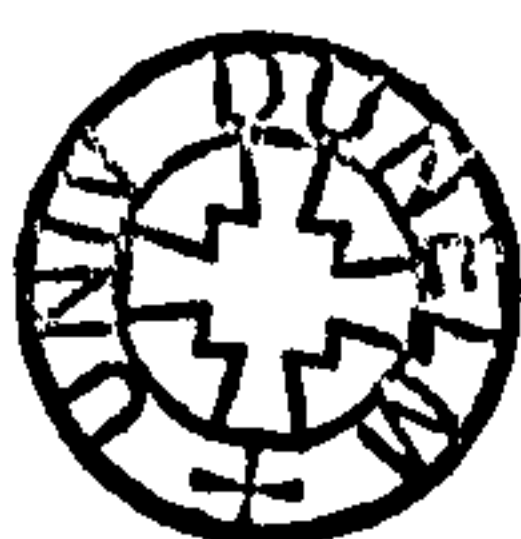
not find difficult. Landscape, which plays so many important roles in the first two parts of the novel would continue to do so in the third part. By now, however, 'landscape' is no longer employed by Lawrence as a *locale*, or as a specific habitat rather than as *nature*. By making London a place of enchanting nature Lawrence hardly aims at showing that the city as such is an interesting place for Cyril to live in. Nature is important in the novel at this stage because of what it indicates about Cyril as a sensitive perceiver:

The Spring came bravely even in South London, and the town was filled with magic....I did not know how time was hastening by on still bright wings, till I saw the scarlet hawthorn flaunting over the road, and the lime-buds lit up like wine drops in the sun, and the pink scarves of the lime-buds pretty as lousewort a-blossom in the gutters, and a silver-pink tangle of almond boughs against the blue sky. The lilacs came out, and in the pensive stillness of the suburb, at night, came the delicious tarry scent of lilac flowers, wakening a silent laughter of romance. (WP 264)

The present announcement of the coming of the new season is another indication of the remarkable artistic sensitivity Cyril displays towards the beauty of nature. The season of flowers reawakens his poetic soul, but it does not make him pine for the bucolic world of his youth. The Spring is special for Cyril because its advent announces his 'brave' approach to the new world of London. He is no longer an outsider there. The artist in him finds the urban world tempting. This is conveyed beautifully through his admiration for its lights which for his poetic eye become 'golden bubbles', 'shining bees', and bright lemons:

I never knew the sumptuous purple of evening till I saw the round arc-lamps fill with light, and roll like golden bubbles along the purple dusk of the high-road. Everywhere at night the city is filled with the magic of lamps: over the River they pour in golden patches their floating luminous oil on the restless darkness; the bright lamps float in and out of the cavern of London Bridge Station like round shining bees in and out of a black hive; in the suburb the street-lamps glimmer with the brightness of lemons among the streets. I began to love the town. (WP 264)

Cyril's perception of the city is strikingly reminiscent of paintings by Whistler and Monet as well as of some poems of Oscar Wilde, but particularly of the poets of the 1890s such as Lord Alfred Douglas, Richard Le Gallienne, Arthur Symons, Theodore



Wratislaw and Ernest Rhys. Lawrence was familiar with the poetry of the 1890s, and knew Rhys personally⁶¹ when he was writing The White Peacock. Lawrence captured in the first novel the magic of lamps that filled the city at night much in the same way as Le Gallienne who compared London with a 'Great flower that opens but at night'.⁶² The painters and poets of the 1890s exerted a great influence on Lawrence's sympathetic perception and acceptance of the city; they played a vital role in his understanding of the significance and the future of the urban world. It was through them that Lawrence started seeing the city as something both unavoidable and necessary to welcome and get used to. Lawrence's handling of the artist-city relationship in The White Peacock is indicative of the visionary artist he was from the start of his writing career.

It would be too much to say that Cyril is a champion of urbanisation of the kind of Paul Morel. Yet it was through Cyril that Lawrence signals the attitude of his artistic *alter egos* of the 1906-1913 period towards the city. The emphasis in The White Peacock is mainly on the artist's familiarisation with the man-made world of the city:

In the mornings I loved to move in the aimless street's procession, watching the faces come near to me, with the sudden glance of dark eyes, watching the mouths of the women blossom with talk as they passed, watching the subtle movements of the shoulders of men beneath their coats, and the naked warmth of their necks that went glowing along the street. I loved the city intensely for its movement of men and women, the soft, fascinating flow of the limbs of men and women, and the sudden flash of eyes and lips as they pass. Among all the faces of the street my attention roved like a bee which clambers drunkenly among blue flowers. I became intoxicated with the strange nectar which I sipped from out of the eyes of the passers-by. (WP 264)

Although Lawrence highlights considerably Cyril's initial acute suffering in exile and his familiarisation with London, the artist's relationship with the city claims no more than a couple of pages in the third chapter of Part III. So much happens so quickly. While it is mentioned that it took Cyril several weeks to adapt himself to the new world, hardly anything is said about how this change occurs. Likewise, the narrator's occupation in Norwood remains a mystery to the end of the book. What claims

Lawrence's attention at this stage is the extent to which Cyril's new experience in the city affects his attitude towards the native valley.

8.9 The Return of the Estranged Native

What impresses the narrator most in London - in addition to the lights - is 'its movement of men and women'. Everybody is on the move in the city. Nothing stands still there. London knows no permanence. Cyril becomes so familiar with the movement and the intensity of the city that when he returns to the valley a year after his initial departure, he could find there none of its former magic:

It was strange that everything was so different. Nethermere even had changed. Nethermere was no longer a complete, wonderful little world that held us charmed inhabitants. It was a small, insignificant valley lost in the spaces of the earth. The tree that had drooped over the brook with such delightful, romantic grace was a ridiculous thing when I came home after a year of absence in the south. The old symbols were trite and foolish. (WP 267)

Cyril's remark that only a year earlier the valley used to be 'a complete wonderful little world that held us charmed inhabitants' seems to contradict much of what he and other protagonists say throughout Parts I and II. From the outset of the novel it is obvious that the valley is anything but a 'complete, wonderful little world', and as from Chapter VI onwards, none of the characters feels happy there. The apparent 'contradiction' throws more light upon the artificiality with which Lawrence handles the alienation of Cyril and of other characters from the valley in Part I and II. On the other hand, this 'contradiction' shows how convincingly this alienation is rendered in the last part of the novel. Nothing has changed as such in Nethermere during the year the narrator has been away. What has really changed is his perception of the former small world as a result of his growth and maturity in exile. By now Cyril's world has expanded and his former world cannot sustain him any longer. Nethermere has become small and dull because he compares and contrasts it with the wide and interesting world he has discovered in London.

Lawrence presents the narrator's alienation from the native valley as an ongoing process that only furthers as years pass by. So much so that in the penultimate chapter of the book Cyril finds himself a complete alien there:

I wandered around Nethermere, which had now forgotten me. The daffodils under the boat-house continued their golden laughter, and nodded to one another in gossip, as I watched them, never for a moment pausing to notice me. The yellow reflection of daffodils among the shadows of grey willow in the water trembled faintly as they told haunted tales in the gloom. I felt like a child left out of the group of my playmates. There was a wind running across Nethermere, and on the eager water blue and glistening grey shadows changed places swiftly. Along the shore the wild birds rose flapping in expostulation as I passed, peewits mewing fiercely round my head, while two swans lifted their glistening feathers till they looked like grand double water-lilies, laying back their orange beaks among the petals, and fronting me with haughty resentment, charging towards me insolently. (WP 305)

The cold reception flowers and birds offer Cyril is in sharp contrast with the friendly company he finds himself in among the brooks, the butterflies, the bracken and the flies in the opening chapter of the novel.⁶³ By now, Cyril feels he is an outsider in his native Nethermere because, while he has become almost a different person in exile, the valley-dwellers have hardly changed at all. His new thoughts and ideas are unlikely to be welcomed in a place and in a community that are used to their long unchallenged inertia. This is the message behind the personification, or rather, of the allegorization of the flowers' and birds' attitude towards the storyteller. Cyril is aware that whatever he will say now is bound to provoke 'gossip', that no one will pause for a moment 'to notice me'. This artist has travelled an extraordinary distance from the world of his youth, and the cold reception he faces there is a clear indication of its unwillingness to accept the new person he has become.

As a returner who feels uneasy at home after he has grown and matured in exile Cyril is not an exception; many of Lawrence's early autobiographical figures find themselves more or less in the same uncomfortable position. What is special about the Cyril-valley relationship at the end of the novel, however, is that none of Lawrence's early literary *alter egos* has to put up with so much bitter feeling at home. The wild birds rising 'flapping in expostulation as I passed', the peewits 'mewing fiercely round

my head', and the two swans 'fronting me with haughty resentment, charging towards me insolently' suggest that he anticipates to encounter there open hostility as well. Whatever hopes he has, or attempts he makes to re-establish some sort of connection with the valley, to be recognised and understood somehow there, come to nothing:

I wanted to be recognised by something. I said to myself that the dryads were looking out for me from the wood's edge. But as I advanced they shrank, and glancing wistfully, turned back like pale flowers falling in the shadow of the forest. I was a stranger, an intruder. Among the bushes a twitter of lively birds exclaimed upon me. Finches went leaping past in bright flashes, and a robin sat and asked rudely 'Hello! Who are you?' (WP 306)

The valley's persistent failure - or rather its stubborn refusal - to recognise Cyril indicates that the gap between his two worlds would never be bridged. The old and the new world would never be reconciled. What is of particular interest at this difficult moment in Cyril's life is that while in a sense he will always remain attached to his native valley, he does not display even the slightest inclination that he would like to return to it for ever. On the contrary, his visits to the birth-place strengthen his belief that 'I had done with the valley of Nethermere' (WP 306). His future is undoubtedly linked with the new, wide world of lights and with people who are ever on the move.

Cyril's choice of the city as his ultimate destination makes for an optimistic note by the end of the novel. It is a choice which implies that unlike an inert character such as the 'condemned' George (WP 325), Cyril looks forward to an active life. Likewise, Cyril's choosing of the city is the earliest indication as yet of the important last-minute decision Paul Morel would make some three years later. Like Cyril, Paul Morel would be faced with the dilemma of choosing between the familiar narrow world of the past and the new challenging world of the city.

In The White Peacock, however, Lawrence was unable to give a comprehensive picture of his artistic *alter ego*'s two worlds. Throughout the novel, the emphasis is mostly on the narrator's world of his youth, but its image is conveyed mostly through symbols, personifications, and allegory. Cyril's past world is almost all landscape and no people. Lawrence tried to make for the absence of the narrator's relation with the

local community by personifying landscape. Such attempts, however, result in literariness which at times undermines the beauty of the narrative, particularly by the end of the novel.

On the other hand, Cyril's new world of the city is never brought to life enough to say what it is really like. Cyril's attachment for the lights of London may well indicate that he admires it and is willing to stay there. For fifteen years, however, the narrator is unable to go beyond admiring. Lawrence mentions nothing about how mixed with the new challenging life the narrator-character is or will be. Although it appears that Cyril has found employment in exile, nothing is said how this artist earns his living during the fifteen years in the city covered in Part III.

In the final chapter of the book Lawrence makes a last-minute attempt to show that, after all, Cyril's exile has been a success. 'I am happy enough, I am living my life,' he says to Emily who has already noticed that he looks worn:

'Don't you find it wearisome?' she asked pityingly.

She made me tell her all my doings, and she marvelled, but all the time her eyes were dubious and pitiful. (WP 319)

But Cyril's 'doings' in the city remain a mystery, and his fulfilment can hardly be taken for granted. In spite of his boasting, the Cyril of Part III is apparently as inactive and uninvolved as before. Most of the time he is an observer of the new attractive world. While he enjoys the crowd moving, Lawrence's first major artistic figure is unable to merge with the city procession (WP 264).

4. CHOOSING TO REMAIN ALONE

4.1 The Artist's Uneasy Quest for the Roots and Nature of His Solitude

Feeling lonely is probably what most of the main protagonists in Lawrence's early works have in common, yet in none of them is this facet displayed more conspicuously than in Cyril Beardsall's character. Apart from Paul Morel in Sons and Lovers, hardly

any other Lawrentian literary *alter ego* remains so detached, keeps himself to himself, as the narrator-character in The White Peacock. Cyril emerges as an exceptionally solitary figure from the outset of the book. In the first chapter he stands alone on the banks of the mill-pond meditating on the lifelessness of the valley. It could be argued that Cyril's solitariness in the opening scene, and for that matter throughout the work, is dictated by the fact that he is the narrator. Solitariness, however, is what Cyril displays most not only as a storyteller. He is equally alone and lonely also as a character, and feels far from happy about it. In Chapter VII he sits alone by the window watching the low clouds reel and stagger past:

It seemed as if everything were being swept along. I myself seemed to have lost my substance, to have become detached from concrete things and the firm trodden pavement of everyday life. Onward, always onward, not knowing where, nor why; the wind, the clouds, the rain and the birds and the leaves, everything, whirling along - why? (WP 83)

Usually in such moments of loneliness Cyril 'talks' to flowers and birds. The present interlocutor is a motionless old crow:

The crow looked at me - I was certain he looked at me.

'What do you think of it all!' I asked him. He eyed me with contempt: great featherless, half winged bird that I was, incomprehensible, contemptible, but awful. I believe he hated me.

'But,' said I, 'if a raven would answer, why won't you?'

He looked wearily away. Nevertheless my gaze disquieted him. He turned uneasily; he rose, waved his wings as if for flight, poised, then settled defiantly down again.

'You are no good,' said I 'you won't help even with a word.' (WP 83)

For someone like Cyril the narrator who chooses to confess so little about himself, and who hardly voices his troubles to his family and friends, such 'conversations' indicate that while he is aware of his loneliness, he is not able as yet to understand or explain why he feels so lonely so often. On the other hand, such 'talks' show that from the first the narrator seems eager to find out why he is so 'detached'.

In an effort 'to escape from myself' (WP 127) Cyril sometimes goes for a walk with other people, but the escape is temporary. His wish that 'something would call me forth from my rooted loneliness' (WP 127) comes to nothing in Part I. This 'rooted

loneliness' goes unchallenged and continues to disturb him to the end of Part II. It is only in its penultimate chapter that Cyril seems to realise for the first time what could be the remedy for his solitude when he comes across 'the larkie's nest':

The two little specks of birds lay side by side, beak to beak, their tiny bodies rising and falling in quick unison. I gently put down my fingers to touch them; they were warm; gratifying to find them warm, in the midst of so much cold and wet! I became curiously absorbed in them, as an eddy of wind stirred the strands of down. When one fledgling moved uneasily, shifting his soft ball, I was quite excited; but he nestled down again, with his head close to his brother's. (WP 220)

Witnessing the 'brotherly' love the two larks display for each other represents something of an epiphanic moment for the narrator: that is what he needs and has missed most, love and mutual understanding:

In my heart of hearts, I longed for someone to nestle me against, someone who would come between me and the coldness and the wetness. I envied the two little miracles [i.e. the two larks] exposed to any tread, yet so serene. It seemed as if I were always wandering, looking for something which they had found even before the light broke into their shell....I ran with my heavy clogs and my heart heavy with vague longing, down to the Mill....What did I want, that I turned thus from one thing to another? (WP 220)

His solitude and restless wandering are perhaps the most discussed aspects of Cyril's personality. While most critics agree that these two features are essential to understanding Cyril, the explanation they offer as to what makes him so lonely and restless does not seem to be based always on hard evidence. Moreover, Cyril's tendency to be alone and his restlessness have always been seen as expressions of his weakness. While Cyril is largely treated as an autobiographical hero, a Lawrence figure, only occasionally his solitariness and unsuccessful quest for something 'elusive' are seen as evidence of his artistic nature.

4.2 Cyril's 'Inability' to Establish Relationships

It is widely believed that Cyril's solitude and restless wandering are indicative first of all of his inability to establish relationships. One commentator has argued recently that Cyril remains 'on the sidelines as an observer' 'being in no way engaged with people'.⁶⁴

The narrator's relation with George, however, tells a rather different story. Their relationship is not only strong but is also the only friendship that survives intact throughout the novel. The affection Cyril and George display for each other, their understanding as well as their disagreement, make it the most realistic and the most sincere of all bonds. No other friendship in The White Peacock claims our sympathy more than theirs. Even if George were Cyril's only friend, the unique nature of such a 'perfect' attachment (WP 223) suggests that the narrator is able to establish a relationship.

But the storyteller does not form a relationship only with George, as a critic claims.⁶⁵ Cyril is equally close to several other people. In fact he is the only character who is respected and loved by so many. He is the ideal loving and caring brother a sister would dream about. He is always welcomed at the Saxtons'; they all rejoice in his coming.⁶⁶ Above all, Cyril is the only character in the book who befriends the unsociable Annable.

In spite of so many close relations with so many people, though, unlike George, Leslie and Tom, Cyril is the only figure in the novel who does not embark on any serious relationship with women. Although he flirts with more than one girl,⁶⁷ he commits himself to none of them.

A considerable number of Lawrentian heroes are inclined to remain celibate or single, and Cyril is one of them. Yet it is difficult to find in Lawrence's early works a character like Cyril who is so cautious and determined not to embark upon a serious relationship with any young woman, to remain free. If Bernard Coutts in 'The Witch à la Mode' is betrothed to Constance to whom he is unfaithful, and Cyril Mersham in 'A Modern Lover' proposes to Muriel that they should sleep together, Cyril Beardsall in The White Peacock chooses neither to woo nor to make love to Emily, or to any other girl, not throughout Parts I and II at least.

Cyril's tendency not to commit himself to any woman has been widely acknowledged. Yet the interpretations offered so far regarding the motives of his attitude towards women reveal that, while commentators approach Cyril as a male

character, they tend to ignore considerably that he is also an artist. John Worthen is perhaps the only critic who has attempted recently to approach Cyril's solitariness, and for that matter his capacity for staying outside events, as traits of an artist.⁶⁸ Unless the artist and the man in Cyril are seen as two important aspects of this narrator-character, much of his behaviour with women is bound to seem enigmatic and obscure, and in some cases also abnormal.

4.3 Misunderstanding Artistic Appreciation for Homosexuality

Cyril's tendency to remain celibate is often seen by commentators as an indication of his homosexual tendencies, and for that reason a rendering of Lawrence's own personal sexual difficulties. John Middleton Murry postulated in 1931 that 'There is, and can be, but one true life of Lawrence; and it is contained in his works'.⁶⁹ To Murry, the bathing scene in the chapter 'A Poem of Friendship' reflects the 'authenticity' of Lawrence's love for the original of George. In his words, 'Cyril's love for George has more of reality in it than any of the love affairs in the book'.⁷⁰

Stephen Miko is critical of Murry who, on the basis of this scene, is close to deducing that Lawrence himself was unable to face up to homosexual propensities, and that this lies at the bottom of all his difficulties.⁷¹ Yet even to Miko, Cyril's rubbing of his naked body against that of the virile and beautiful George is indicative of the homosexuality of Lawrence's artistic *alter ego*.⁷² This, as well as the fact that one of the female characters calls Cyril 'Sybil' or 'Pat' throughout the book, reveal 'the feminine nature of the cultured narrator'. Miko goes so far as to theorise that 'Cyril's loneliness is a function of his sensitivity to both sexes, which he cannot resolve by choosing one'.⁷³

Indeed, there are some homoerotic notes in Cyril's appreciation of George's physique in the pond, but this is not what the rubbing scene is mainly about. Those who can see only the homoeroticism of this bathing incident are apparently misled by the word 'love', or rather misread it. The main connotation of 'love' in this context is not 'sex'. Cyril's love for George is the aesthetic pleasure he derives from the

contemplation of a human being who is 'well proportioned, and naturally of handsome physique, heavily limbed' (WP 222). It is not accidental that as Cyril enjoys watching George standing 'in white relief against the mass of green' he remarks: 'I admired the noble, white fruitfulness of his form....[and] remembered the story of Annable.' Cyril admires George's physique as Lady Chrystabel does that of Annable. Cyril has learned from the gamekeeper that Lady Chrystabel 'drew Greek statues of me - her Croton, her Hercules!' (WP 150). Both Lady Chrystabel and Cyril enjoy contemplating Annable and George respectively more as 'works of art' rather than as individuated human beings.⁷⁴

Probably critics fail to interpret Cyril's interest in George's physique as an indication of his artistic nature because, unlike Lady Chrystabel, the narrator is hardly depicted as being engaged seriously in any creative activity. Had Lawrence emphasised more Cyril's tendency to write verses, or to paint, scenes like the bathing incident would have been seen as evidence displaying the narrator's aesthetic feeling as an artist rather than as proof of his homoeroticism.

On the other hand, the attention Cyril pays to George's physique reflects also yet another influence some painters of the 1890s had on Lawrence's writing. Painting people bathing in the nude, mainly boys, was a familiar artistic conception by the end of the nineteenth century. The bathing scene in The White Peacock marks the beginning of Lawrence's tendency to depict in writing nude characters, a tendency which by the end of his life was seen clearly also in his own paintings.

4.4 The Nature of the Artist-Mother Relationship

The son-mother relationship is a recurrent theme in Lawrence's early writing, and this is obvious also in The White Peacock. In this novel, however, the theme is not as central as it is in other works, and not as pivotal as in Sons and Lovers.

Using the theory that Cyril is apparently an early study for Paul Morel, some critics are often inclined to draw hasty parallels between the relationships Cyril and Paul have with their mothers. Cases are not few when Mrs Beardsall's impact on Cyril is equated

with Mrs Morel's influence on Paul. To Julian Moynahan, for instance, like Paul, Cyril 'is also quite obviously in love with his mother. That is really why he is so half-hearted in his spasmodic search for adult love and relatedness'.⁷⁵ Echoing the same view, John Stoll suggests that Mrs Beardsall may be seen as 'the source of Cyril's self-division'.⁷⁶ It is difficult to see how the critics come to such conclusions, particularly because they too note that, except for a few brief indications, the Mrs Beardsall-Cyril 'crucial relationship is missing from the book'.⁷⁷

Cyril is attached to Mrs Beardsall, and so is she to him. Yet there is no evidence in the book that such relationship has left Cyril emotionally 'crippled', or that his capacity to move from childhood attachments into adulthood is destroyed by 'a devouring maternal possessiveness'.⁷⁸ If there is anything excessive or abnormal in this son-mother attachment, this is seen not in the published novel, but in its early versions. In the first surviving fragment of 'Laetitia', for instance, the implications are that Mrs Beardsall has always domineered over her two children. As a girl Lettie used to leave 'the care of everything, even myself',⁷⁹ to her mother. Lettie has always been her mother's girl, and will continue to 'cling' to her 'so much' even in the future.

In this early version of 'Laetitia' Cyril is at a loss in the wake of his farming friends' and Lettie's departure from Nethermere. He considers both marriage and exile, yet remains undecided. The only thing he can think clearly about in such a critical moment is that he cannot envisage his future without his mother: 'Where I go my mother now must go; - but she is brave; but she is also old - I do not know.'⁸⁰

The little Cyril says about his relationship with his mother suggests that he is not speaking simply as a loving and caring son. The implication here is that he cannot face exile without his mother's company and support. His elliptical remarks - 'but she is brave; but she is also old' - show more than intense admiration for his courageous old mother. Above all, they are indicative of his uneasiness for being so undecided and faint-hearted in the prime of youth.

While it is difficult to say how close Cyril is to Mrs Beardsall throughout 'Laetitia' I, the surviving fragment implies that the son is very much attached to her.

Apparently, at this stage Cyril is completely under the spell of his mother's authority. This early Mrs Beardsall is not only Cyril's source of strength but also the main source of his weakness.

It is hard to say how Lawrence handled the narrator-mother relationship in 'Laetitia' II because, apparently, nothing has survived from it. One can notice easily, though, that the Cyril-Mrs Beardsall relation in the published novel is treated almost differently from 'Laetitia' I.

The narrator-character's relation with his mother in The White Peacock differs considerably also from that depicted in the manuscript from which the novel's first edition was set.⁸¹ Leaf 195 of this final manuscript, for instance, reads: "If I might only grow up to be like Mr Gladstone!" was my mother's only wish. Alas, how many of us fulfil the wishes of our mother?"⁸² These lines are not included in the published novel. The deletion suggests that Lawrence was becoming conscious of the absurdity of such statements, and that he was gradually purifying his style of Ruskinian and other artistic influences. On the other hand, it could be argued that the deletion is indicative of Lawrence's attempt to reduce to a minimum Mrs Beardsall's influence on Cyril. This is more obvious if one considers that Lawrence omitted from the final manuscript also several other passages which are indicative of the mother's intimacy with and influence on Lettie,⁸³ and Cyril, or on both of them. Of particular interest is the omission from 'Nethermere' II of three consecutive leaves - 213, 214, 215 - which contain the conversation Mrs Beardsall has with her two children about her own life before marriage. During that talk she indirectly cautions them not to be careless like her when they will have to take important decisions in life.

As a result of Lawrence's persistent cutting of such passages from the final manuscript of 'Nethermere', Mrs Beardsall ceases to have any special impact on Cyril in the published novel. By now Cyril is hardly more active than what he used to be in the early versions of the novel, but his inactivity has nothing to do with his mother. Cyril never ceases to be a loving and a caring son, yet he does not cling to her. Nor does he crave for her support when he is in difficulty. It takes this young artist a long

time until he finally makes up his mind to leave Nethermere, but his undecidedness is not related to his mother's unwillingness to let him go. Nor does he express any wish to go to exile together with his mother, as this is the case in 'Laetitia' I. There are several possessive mothers in The White Peacock - Lettie, Meg, Emily - but Mrs Beardsall is not one of them. Whether Cyril hesitates or decides to act throughout Parts I and II, his mother remains largely unable to exert any influence on him. And in Part III Mrs Beardsall disappears almost unnoticed.

4.5 The Parental Conflict and Cyril's Celibacy

It is almost impossible to find in Lawrence's early works examples of successful marriages, and The White Peacock is no exception to this. Some commentators argue that, in an environment where 'marriage' is apparently not a harmonious relation Cyril is bound to grow up having a prejudice against the institution of marriage as such. Cyril's 'rooted loneliness', his prolonged inertia, and above all, his persistent unwillingness to commit himself to any young woman have often been explained with the impact several unhappy marriages - particularly that of his parents - have on him. John Stoll holds that sometimes Cyril identifies himself 'completely'⁸⁴ with Frank Beardsall, and as such 'accepts the father's failure as his own'.⁸⁵ Whereas, according to John Worthen, it is 'inconceivable that Cyril - himself damaged by a parental conflict - could do anything so positive as to marry anyone'.⁸⁶

The 'parental conflict' is known to both Cyril and his sister since they were small children. Yet it is Lettie rather than he who seems to have been affected most by it. Her parents' unsuccessful relation has spoilt both Lettie's childhood and youth. So much so that it seems mainly because of this abortive marriage that the flower which is born in her takes so long to bring forth.⁸⁷

The narrator never admits that his parents' failure to live together has made his life difficult. Nevertheless, unlike Lettie, he is occasionally critical of father Frank. Early in the novel he refers to the living father as 'a frivolous, rather vulgar character', 'a liar, without notion of honesty', who 'deceived' and left Mrs Beardsall 'for other pleasures'

(WP 33). Cyril's opinion about Frank is equally unsympathetic when he is dead. Cyril has no regret he never had a father:

'We're thankful we hadn't, mother. You spared us that.'

'But how can you tell?'

'I can,' I replied. 'And I am thankful to you.'

'If ever you feel scorn for one who is near you rising in your throat, try and be generous, my lad.'

'Well ' said I.

'Yes,' she replied 'we'll say no more. Sometime you must tell Lettie - you tell her.' - (WP 43)

This is not the only case in which Mrs Beardsall shows no ill feelings towards her husband. Nor does she put *all* the blame on Frank at any time in the novel. On the contrary, the mother accepts more than once that she has not treated him fairly. Throughout the years of his absence, Frank had always wanted the children, but Mrs Beardsall had insisted in keeping them from him. Cyril's words imply that she has played a major role in detaching him and his sister from the father. The novel, however, hardly offers enough evidence to substantiate such a claim. The impression one gets from Mrs Beardsall's words towards her husband in The White Peacock is that of an unhappy wife who prefers to keep the grief to herself than share it with her children. This makes the son's intense dislike for the father somehow incongruous and enigmatic.

Cyril's low opinion of his father becomes less a mystery if we study some passages deleted from the novel's ultimate manuscript. It has been remarked that in his early years as a writer Lawrence had to accept with more or less good will stringent editing by a publisher's reader. Likewise, it had been noted that sometimes a publisher made more changes than he admitted to Lawrence.⁸⁸

True and important as these observations are, however, it would be simpleminded to assume that even at the beginning of his writing career Lawrence accepted easily any change he would not agree about. Nor would it be fair to Lawrence to postulate that he was not involved in most of the last-minute changes. After all, it is a well-

known fact that Lawrence revised at every possible stage; a process which involved changing, editing, and also deleting.

In the last manuscript of The White Peacock, for instance, there are several passages about the Lettice-Frank unhappy marriage which are not included in the novel's published version. There is hardly anything in these deleted passages which could have made the publisher fear Grundyish disapproval or legal action. As such, the deletions cannot be considered as instances of last-minute bowdlerisation, or censorship.

The unique thing about these deleted passages is that they all reveal one important aspect of the Mrs Beardsall-children relationship which is almost absent in the published novel: her tendency to tell them as much as possible about her abortive marriage, to share her grief and disappointment with them, and to alienate them from their father. In Chapter III, for instance, Lettie's speech about her family's troubled life is deleted immediately after the explicit reference she makes to Mrs Beardsall's intense hatred for Frank.⁸⁹ Andrew Robertson holds that this and other deletions of the same nature are indicative of Lawrence's sensitivity about revealing his own mother's history.⁹⁰ This may be the case. Yet explanations of this kind are more useful in approaching a diary rather than a work of fiction. The deletions reveal, among other things, Lawrence's tendency to reduce as much as possible the impact of the Lettice-Frank unsuccessful marriage particularly on Cyril. Had Lawrence not omitted the passage in Chapter III in which the mother tells her children that she did not calculate when she got married, and advised them to be careful in choosing a spouse,⁹¹ the implication could have been that Mrs Beardsall is directly responsible for much of their behaviour as adults: for Lettie's hesitations in choosing her husband, as well as for Cyril's persistent unwillingness to commit himself to any woman.

Apparently, Lawrence did not want Cyril to be seen as someone who could not mix with people, or could not get married because he was damaged by the parental conflict. He stays alone most of the time, and remains unmarried to the end of the novel of his own free will.

4.6 The Battle of Sexes

Although his parents' unfortunate match could have started Cyril's bias against marriage, the fact that in The White Peacock there are at least seven unsuccessful matches suggests that the narrator's attitude towards women is a very complex issue. From the outset of the book 'a general feminine outcry on masculine callousness' (WP 12) is heard distinctively. Hardly any woman thinks highly of her husband, fiancé, or partner. Men are widely considered as mean, uncivilised creatures,⁹² and 'great infants' (WP 75).⁹³

Lawrence does not say if he agrees or not with what women think of men. The implication, however, is that he patronises men. The male characters admit in many cases that they find it difficult, if not impossible, to understand what their female counterparts really want. They are constantly perplexed by women's hard-heartedness and whims. Women are often referred to as 'cruel' (WP 52) beings whose 'wants' and 'caprices' know 'no end' (WP 77), as 'tradesmen' always striking a bargain (WP 90) that would please only them but leave no one else a chance (WP 109-10), as white peacocks: 'all vanity and screech and defilement' (WP 149).

Men and women in Lawrence's first novel are all unhappy and uneasy with each other. There is no harmony at all in the relationship between the two sexes. For each couple 'Marriage is more of a duel than a duet' (WP 301). Spouses and partners are engaged in a fierce battle for supremacy. The sex war knows neither truce nor compromise. And the winners are always the women. As for men, they either run away like Cyril's father and the gamekeeper, or are taken 'captives', 'slaves', 'servants',⁹⁴ as is the case with George and Leslie.

Of all the male characters in the novel only Cyril affiliates himself neither with the 'deserters' of the sex war, nor with its subdued 'prisoners'. Apparently, Lawrence depicts his first artistic *alter ego* as a wise figure who resolves to remain uncommitted to any woman because he had seen far too many unsuccessful marriages in his life to make the mistake of getting married for himself. Cyril has to avoid marriage so that he

can eliminate the danger of being possessed, bullied, ruled by a woman. Mixing with women endangers what is obviously Cyril's most precious thing: his freedom.

Apparently, throughout the years he was writing The White Peacock Lawrence had a prejudice against marriage and the impact women could have on men. His unsuccessful attempts to find a woman who could understand and support him as man and artist, and at the same time leave him free certainly did have an impact on how he treated marital relationships in the first book. This is probably the main reason why there are no happy couples in this novel.

It has been suggested, however, that the Emily-Tom relationship is unique. In the words of a commentator, this is the only 'notably successful, unblighted marriage in the book'.⁹⁵ Apparently, those who come to this conclusion tend to make too much of the passage in which Cyril notes that Emily is in perfect accord with the warm, loveable, serene home of the Renshaws, 'with its brownness, its shadows, its ease':

Emily, in her full-blooded beauty, was at home. It is rare now to feel a kinship between a room and the one who inhabits it, a close bond of blood relation. Emily had at last found her place, and had escaped from the torture of strange, complex modern life. She was making a pie, and the flour was white on her brown arms. She pushed the tickling hair from her face with her arm, and looked at me with tranquil pleasure, as she worked the paste in the yellow bowl. I was quiet, subdued before her.

'You are happy?' I said.

'Ah very!' she replied. (WP 319)

Emily herself seems content with her life, yet it takes two equal partners to make a happy couple. Emily has not married her match but a submissive, simple-minded farmer who makes no efforts to disguise his inferiority. All the thinking in his house is done by his superior wife; something which Cyril notes and ridicules from the moment he makes his acquaintance:

I liked Tom for his handsome bearing and his fresh, winsome way. He was exceedingly manly: that is to say he did not dream of questioning or analysing anything. All that came his way was ready labelled nice or nasty, good or bad. He did not imagine that anything could be other than just what it appeared to be, - and with this appearance, he was quite content. He looked up to Emily as one wiser, nobler, nearer to God than himself. (WP 308)

Emily is perhaps the first Lawrentian woman character who is willing to live with a man only if he acknowledges her superiority and allows her to have full control over his life. 'I am a thousand years older than he,' she says to the narrator about Tom, laughing:

'And you love him for his youth?' I asked.

'Yes,' she replied. 'For that, and - he is wonderfully sagacious - and so gentle.' (WP 308)

A closer look at Tom's 'wisdom' and 'gentleness' indicates that Emily has married him mainly because he is ever willing to put up with her. Tom can do anything just to please his wife even if at times his behaviour - as this is the case when he speaks to his father in dialect, but to Emily in 'good English' (WP 322) - makes him a ridiculous figure.

As one of Lawrence's first major female characters Emily's importance lies also in the fact that she is one of his early interesting studies in the image of the possessive mother; a figure which emerges frequently particularly throughout the early period of his creative writing. Although at this stage Emily is still pregnant, it is obvious that as a mother she would be as possessive as Meg and Lettie. Emily would not abandon Tom after her child's birth because she has already abandoned him. Yet Tom is willing to accept further humiliation for the sake of their 'happy' life together. Remarking her 'angry contempt' for George's criticism of Meg who has 'marded' the children 'till they were soft', and would not let him have a say in their bringing up, Tom suggests to Emily:

that she should go out with him to look at the stacks. I watched the tall, square-shouldered man leaning with deference and tenderness towards his wife as she walked calmly at his side. She was the mistress, quiet and self-assured, he her rejoiced husband and servant. (WP 323)

It is not accidental that Lawrence introduces Cyril to this 'happily' married couple in the last two chapters of the novel. Lawrence may have well felt frustrated by Cyril 'the fool',⁹⁶ yet throughout the book, but particularly in Part III, he makes no effort to hide his support and praise for whatever his artistic *alter ego* does or says. The attention he

pays to the Emily figure by now, the tendency to highlight her weak points as domineering wife and possessive would-be mother indicate that Lawrence is keen to vindicate Cyril's decision not to marry his 'old sweetheart'.

4.7 Emily: the Woman the Artist Loves and Must Leave

The study of a female character like Emily is important particularly because of her relation with Lawrence's first literary *alter ego*. From the outset of the novel it is obvious that Cyril is close to Emily in a way as he is to no one else. She is the only person to whom he confides his verses. Likewise, no one except Cyril seems to know that she writes stories.⁹⁷ Although not much is said about it, the implication is that Cyril and Emily are drawn to each other in the first place because of the interest they take in one another's creative writing.

The Cyril-Emily relation, however, is not simply literary. Although they hardly flirt in Parts I and II, one can easily see that they always feel something for each other. It would probably be wrong to assume that Cyril never takes Emily seriously as a young woman, or that they could not form a relationship with each other.⁹⁸ The general belief is that Emily is a 'shadowy' figure.⁹⁹ Not for Cyril though. From the start he seems to know Emily better than any other character.

Considering the critical attitude Cyril adopts toward Emily from the first, however, it is obvious that Lawrence pays particular attention to this relationship not so much to show what the two young protagonists have in common as what sets them apart. Cyril is critical about Emily more than about anyone else. What he finds most disagreeable about her in Part I is the 'earnest, troublesome soul' she has always got in her eyes (WP 69). To him, 'Emily had the gift of sorrow' (WP 70). He could read it in her eyes and in the tones of her voice; something which 'fascinated me, but it drove me to rebellion' (WP 70).

The source and nature of Emily's grief remain obscure throughout Part I. The implication, however, is that much of her sorrow comes from her disagreement with Cyril. Although they meet each other frequently, they can hardly be described as a

happy couple. In Part II Cyril and Emily do not get along any better with one another. Nor are they for that matter more explicit about their criticism of each other. By now, however, some of Emily's attitudes towards Cyril indicate why he does not make any effort to get on more intimate terms with her. Possessiveness becomes the main trait of Emily's character in this part of the book. She is jealous of Cyril's relationship with George and Alice,¹⁰⁰ and is unhappy if any one displays attachment or affection for him or vice versa. Cyril is aware of how Emily feels. Yet considering that even in Part II Lawrence hardly depicts them as lovers, Cyril's frustration towards her possessive nature is expressed indirectly through the narrative. As a narrator he feels apparently very uneasy about Emily's possessiveness when he witnesses how she takes care of Sam - the little thief - immediately after he is attacked by Trip, the Saxtons' great bull-terrier:

Emily went on her knees before him, and put her face close to his, saying, with a voice that made one shrink from its unbridled emotion of caress:

'Did he hurt you, Eh? - tell us where he hurt you.' She would have put her arms round him but he shrank away. (WP 187)

Shortly afterwards, Emily goes back to Sam 'to coax him and make him at home':

She kissed him, and talked to him with her full vibration of emotional caress. It seemed almost to suffocate him. Then she tried to feed him with bread and milk from a spoon, but he would not open his mouth, and turned his head away.
(WP 187)

Emily's possessive behaviour in this scene would become a common pattern in Miriam Leivers's attitude a couple of years later. But if in Sons and Lovers Miriam's behaviour is clearly indicative of the risks she poses to the freedom of Paul Morel, the little attention Lawrence pays to describe Emily and Cyril as lovers makes her possessive attitude towards him not very conspicuous.

In Part III of The White Peacock Lawrence highlights more than ever before Emily's possessive nature, but not until he has made it clear that Cyril is interested in her more as a woman rather than as an intellectual or artistic person. In the fourth chapter of this part Lawrence is keen to record for the first time every moment Cyril flirts with and kisses Emily either when they are alone or in the company of other

people. Within few pages - 268-271 - Lawrence records more love-making moments in the Cyril-Emily relationship than ever before or after.

In most cases when Emily and Cyril display such a strong affinity for each other in Part III, one of George's babies is always with them. For a while the presence of the baby figure in such intimate scenes seems to bring Emily and Cyril closer to each other. But not for long. Cyril becomes increasingly uneasy about the amount of attention Emily pays to the baby. She stifles and possesses it much in the same way as she has previously done with Sam. By now, however, Lawrence makes it very clear how Cyril feels about Emily's attitude towards the child. He disapproves of the attention she pays to the baby because he feels ignored:

She persisted in talking to the baby, and in talking to me about the baby, till I wished the child in Jericho. This made her laugh, and she continued to tantalise me....Thus she teased me by flinging me all kinds of bright gages of love while she kept me aloof because of the child. She laughed with pure pleasure at this state of affairs, and delighted the more when I frowned... (WP 273)

Shortly afterwards Cyril feels Emily is completely forgetful of his presence when she bathes the baby:

A distinct, glowing atmosphere seemed suddenly to burst out around her and the child, leaving me outside. The moment before she had been very near to me, her eyes searching mine, her spirit clinging timidly about me. Now I was put away, quite alone, neglected, forgotten, outside the glow which surrounded the woman and the baby. (WP 277)

Although at this stage Emily is not yet married to Tom, Cyril makes no distinction between her and other possessive mothers in general. The implication of Emily's present attitude towards Cyril is that she would be as inconsiderate of her future husband's feelings as Lady Chrystabel of Annable's sentiments and male pride:

A woman is so ready to disclaim the body of a man's love; she yields him her own soft beauty with so much gentle patience and regret; she clings to his neck, to his head and his cheeks, fondling them for the soul's meaning that is there, and shrinking from his passionate limbs and his body. It was with some perplexity, some anger and bitterness that I watched Emily moved almost to ecstasy by the baby's small, innocuous person. (WP 277-8)

Apparently, Lawrence intended this as a moment of epiphany for Cyril. Its implication is that it is there and then that he realised that he could not marry a woman like her and indeed, that he would never get married at all. The passage reveals the impact Schopenhauer's views on love and marriage exerted on Lawrence when he was writing The White Peacock. Emily's attention to the baby and her ignoring of Cyril seem to illustrate Schopenhauer's postulate in 'The Metaphysics of Love' that 'the kernel of passionate love turns on the anticipation of the child to be born'.¹⁰¹

Later in the novel it becomes clear that, like Cyril, Emily too has no illusions that she and Cyril could marry each other. Emily marries Tom not because she finds herself jilted, or abandoned, or because she wants to protest against his ignoring her. Cyril and Emily never express the wish to marry each other throughout the Nethermere years. There is always a silent understanding between them that they can have no future together. It is for this reason that when Cyril exiles himself in Part III he shows no regret that he was departing from Emily. Nor does he give her any hint after leaving the valley that one day they would get married. As such the disappointment he experiences in Part III when he learns that she has made up her mind to marry Tom sounds both faked and incongruous.

The fact that Emily tells Cyril by the very end of the book that, to her, 'you are centuries older than I' (WP 308) does not suggest so much that he is her superior in knowledge and experience rather than she is confident that it would have been virtually impossible for her to possess and rule him in the same way as she can control and manipulate Tom. Emily's words that Cyril has been '[a]s restless and as urgent as the wind' (WP 308) throughout the early years of their friendship suggest that not only she had tried and failed to control and possess him, but also that he too had tried hard and eventually had failed to make her understand and accept him as he is.

Lawrence, however, hardly explains why and to what extent Cyril and Emily disagree with each other throughout Parts I and II. Their relationship never really becomes a relation as such. In the concluding part of the book they become suddenly very intimate with each other, but their intimacy does not last for long. Lawrence

brings Cyril and Emily together in the end to show that women are a major threat to the narrator-character. Lawrence would like us to believe that a woman like Emily does not - cannot - let Cyril *be*, that she endangers his freedom.

The fact that in Part III Lawrence pays attention to the Emily-Cyril relationship more than ever before indicates that only at this stage in the book Cyril's relation with women emerges as the second important theme in the novel after that of exile. But while Lawrence eventually succeeds in justifying what makes Cyril leave the native valley after so many years of uneasiness and hesitation, the theme of the narrator's relationship with women is not rendered convincingly. Cyril's decision to remain uncommitted does not come as a result of his own experience. He avoids making mistakes in his life not simply because he is prudent in his actions, but because he draws conclusions about himself by observing others' failures. As John Worthen puts it, Cyril is one of Lawrence's early autobiographical figures - whether they are artists or potential artists - who are incapable of tragedy themselves.¹⁰²

The sketchy picture Lawrence drew of Cyril's relationships and contradictions with women in The White Peacock indicated clearly that, while the theme was very important to Lawrence, he had not found out as yet how to handle it satisfactorily. That Lawrence was particularly interested in the artist's relationship with women is seen also from the fact that he devoted his second novel exclusively to this theme. Apparently, Lawrence felt in no time the need to re-address the issue of the artist's relation with woman which he tackled inconclusively in the concluding Part of the first novel. Helen Corke may have well offered Lawrence a story to write about, but the theme of The Trespasser was originally provided by The White Peacock.

NOTES: CHAPTER THREE

1. In the chapter 'The Scent of Blood' Cyril is sketching when his sister Lettie asks him to join her for a walk (WP 46), and in the chapter 'Lettie Pulls down the small gold Grapes' he is not hesitant to paint in the presence of the Saxtons when the children 'claimed' his help (WP 87).
2. In the chapter 'Strange Blossoms, and Strange New Budding' Cyril who clings to the earth 'yearning and impatient' as he watches the clouds moving on to their 'vast destination' finally takes a brush and tries to paint them. Apparently Cyril hopes to find in the painted pilgrim-like clouds 'something [that] would call me forth from my rooted loneliness' (WP 127).
3. Richard Aldington, Introduction, The White Peacock, by D. H. Lawrence (London: Heinemann, 1950), pp. v-ix (p. vii). (Hereafter cited as Aldington's Introduction to WP).
4. For Cyril's performance as a nineteenth-century storyteller see John Worthen, Early Years, p. 148, and Michael Black, Philosophical Works, p. 33.
5. John Worthen, Early Years, p. 148.
6. For Cyril's treatment as an 'observer' see John Worthen, Early Years, p. 227, and Alastair Niven, D. H. Lawrence: The Novels (Cambridge, 1979), p. 23.
7. Early Years, p. 227.
8. Ibid., p. 148.
9. Although in his Philosophical Works Michael Black acknowledges Cyril's 'modernity', he is more interested in highlighting Lawrence's achievement as a novelist rather than Cyril's sensitivity as an artistic narrator (see Philosophical Works, pp. 26-36).
10. Ibid., p. 26.
11. Ibid., p. 33.
12. Ibid., p. 27.
13. Ibid., p. 29.
14. For this observation I am indebted to Michael Black (see Philosophical Works, p. 31).
15. Early Years, p. 227.
16. See Alastair Niven, D. H. Lawrence: The Novels, p. 23, and John Worthen, Early Years, p. 227.

17. Early Years, p. 148.
18. For more on the influence the Romantic poets and Richard Jefferies exerted on Lawrence see Roger Ebbatson, Lawrence and the Nature Tradition: A Theme in the English Fiction: 1859-1914 (Sussex: Harvester P, 1980), pp. 127-8, 131, 133, 162-3. (Hereafter cited as Lawrence and Nature Tradition).
19. See Marko Modiano, Domestic Disharmony and Industrialization in D. H. Lawrence's Early Fiction (Uppsala, 1987), p. 55. (Hereafter cited as Domestic Disharmony).
20. See Colin Milton, Lawrence and Nietzsche, p. 22.
21. Letter to Rolf Gardiner, 3 December 1926, in The Letters of D. H. Lawrence, Volume 5, March 1924 - March 1927, eds. James T. Boulton and Lindeth Vasey (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 591-3 (p. 592).
22. As Richard Aldington observes, The White Peacock mirrors only the beginning of Lawrence's concerns regarding the unpleasant consequences of industrialism (see Aldington's Introduction to WP, p. vii).
23. In her review of The White Peacock in the Daily Chronicle, 10 February 1911, Violet Hunt referred to it as a 'political document' (see R. P. Draper, ed. D. H. Lawrence: The Critical Heritage (London: Routledge, 1970), pp. 38-9. (Hereafter cited as Critical Heritage)).
24. John Worthen, D. H. Lawrence: A Literary Life (London: Macmillan, 1989), p. 11. (Hereafter cited as Literary Life).
25. D. H. Lawrence, 'Nottingham and the Mining Countryside' in Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of D. H. Lawrence, by D. H. Lawrence, ed. Edward D. McDonald (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1936), pp. 133-40 (p. 133).
26. Enid Hilton, More Than One Life: A Nottinghamshire Childhood with D. H. Lawrence (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1993), p. 10.
27. Ibid., p. 13.
28. See Robert E. Gajdusek, 'A Reading of The White Peacock', in A D. H. Lawrence Miscellany, ed. Harry T. Moore (Cambridge, 1959), pp. 188-203, and Colin Milton, Lawrence and Nietzsche, pp. 67-9, 71, 85.
29. To John Worthen, the narrative of The White Peacock is Pre-Raphaelite, among other things, 'in its flowers and nymphs and loving detail, though laden with the self-conscious significance and rhetoric of a piece by Richard Jefferies' (see Early Years, p. 193). Roger Ebbatson and J. R. Watson see The White Peacock's openness to the landscape as coming down from Richard Jefferies (see Roger Ebbatson, Lawrence and Nature Tradition, pp. 47, 51, 58, 251, 262-3; and

- J. R. Watson, "'The country of my heart': D. H. Lawrence and the East Midlands Landscape", in The Spirit of D. H. Lawrence: Centenary Studies, eds. Gãmini Salgãdo and G. K. Das (London: Macmillan, 1990), pp. 16-31 (p. 20). (Hereafter cited as 'East Midlands Landscape')). For the influence of, or parallels with Emily Brontë on Lawrence's handling of landscape in his first novel see Michael Black, Philosophical Works, p. 11.
30. J. R. Watson, 'East Midlands Landscape', p. 23. For other treatment of this subject see Alastair Niven, D. H. Lawrence: The Novels, p. 14.
 31. John Worthen sees Lettie's delusions, hallucinations and attempts to express her wounded feelings in the first surviving fragment of 'Laetitia' as being reminiscent of Emily Brontë and Hardy (see Early Years, p. 139). On page 140 of the same work Worthen notes also that Lawrence wrote his first novel in the melodrama tradition of Hardy and other writers.
 32. See Jessie Chambers, Personal Record, p. 179.
 33. See Julian Moynahan, The Deed of Life: the Novels and Tales of D. H. Lawrence (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1963), p. 65. (Hereafter cited as Deed of Life); and Michael Bell, Language and Being, p. 20.
 34. See Alastair Niven, D. H. Lawrence: The Novels, p. 14.
 35. See Richard Aldington, Introduction to WP, p. viii.
 36. Stephen J. Miko, Towards Women in Love: The Emergence of a Lawrentian Aesthetic (New Haven: Yale UP, 1971), p. 20. (Hereafter cited as Lawrentian Aesthetic).
 37. Deed of Life, p. 65.
 38. See Stephen J. Miko, Lawrentian Aesthetic, p. 20; Alastair Niven, D. H. Lawrence: The Novels, pp. 11, 14; J. R. Watson, 'East Midlands Landscape', pp. 20, 23; John Stoll, The Novels of D. H. Lawrence: A Search for Integration (Columbia: U of Missouri P, 1976), p. 16. (Hereafter cited as Search for Integration); Michael Black, Philosophical Works, p. 11.
 39. See Stephen J. Miko, Lawrentian Aesthetic, pp. 11-4, 22.
 40. Ibid., p. 14.
 41. For Cyril's treatment as 'observer' see John Worthen, Early Years, p. 227, and Alastair Niven, D. H. Lawrence: The Novels, p. 23.
 42. Early Years, p. 227.
 43. Stephen J. Miko argues that in The Trespasser Lawrence 'avoids some of the difficulties of The White Peacock by simplifying the plot, reducing the number

of important characters, and removing the narrator from the action, thereby keeping his ineffectuality out of the reader's consciousness' (see Lawrentian Aesthetic, p. 34).

44. D. H. Lawrence, ms., The Two Surviving Fragments of 'Laetitia', Bancroft Library, U of California, Berkeley; printed in The White Peacock, by D. H. Lawrence, ed. Andrew Robertson (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 329-51 (p. 351). (Hereafter cited as 'Laetitia').
45. 'Laetitia', p. 345.
46. Ibid.
47. Ibid.
48. Alastair Niven, D. H. Lawrence: The Novels, p. 11.
49. Personal Record, p. 151.
50. On 11 November 1908 Lawrence wrote to Blanche Jennings: 'I don't believe Lettie ever did break her engagement with Leslie - she married him' (see Letters, i, pp. 91-2 (p. 92)).
51. Letter to Blanche Jennings, 1 November 1909, in Letters, i, pp. 140-2 (p. 141).
52. 'Laetitia', p. 345.
53. For more information on Richard Jefferies's ability to see through nature into the life of things and characters see Roger Ebbatson, Lawrence and Nature Tradition, p. 128.
54. Letter to Louie Burrows, 11 September 1909, in Letters, i, pp. 137-8 (p. 137).
55. John Worthen maintains that some weak points of Jefferies's prose such as its self-conscious significance and rhetoric are apparent also in 'Laetitia' II (see Early Years, p. 193).
56. J. R. Watson, 'East Midlands Landscape', p. 25.
57. See the map of Nethermere in WP, p. xiv.
58. In her essay 'Concerning The White Peacock' Helen Corke notes that the people of the story live within a 'little world' (see Helen Corke, 'Considering The White Peacock', in D. H. Lawrence: The Croydon Years, by Helen Corke (Austin: U of Texas P, 1965), pp. 47-56 (p. 52)).
59. To Richard Aldington, The White Peacock is the book of Lawrence's 'youth, and full of tender love and wistful regret for youth's passing' (see Aldington's Introduction to WP, p. vii).

60. The boomerang-like 'exile' of George, Leslie, Lettie and Emily has already been discussed in the present chapter in section 3.6.
61. For Lawrence's meetings with and opinion of Ernest Rhys and his wife Grace see in Letters, i, Lawrence's letters to Louie Burrows, 20 November 1909, pp. 144-5 (p. 144), 11 December 1909, p. 147, 9 March 1910, p. 156; to Grace Crawford, 12 December 1909, pp. 147-8 (p. 148); to Rachel Annand Taylor, 30 September 1910, pp. 179-80 (p. 180); to Ernest Collings, 24 December 1912, pp. 490-2 (p. 491); to Edward Garnett, 12 January 1913, pp. 500-2 (p. 502); and John Worthen, Early Years, pp. 217, 220, 230-1.
62. Richard Le Gallienne, A Ballad of London, in The Poetry of the 'Nineties, ed. R. K. R. Thornton (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970), pp. 59-60 (p. 59).
63. Cyril's close relation with his circumambient universe in his youth has already been discussed in the present chapter in section 3.1.
64. Early Years, p. 227.
65. See Alastair Niven, D. H. Lawrence: The Novels, p. 23.
66. For the Saxtons' cordial reception of Cyril at the farm see WP, pp. 3, 87, 92.
67. For Cyril's flirtatious behaviour see WP, pp. 101, 108, 199, 315-6.
68. Early Years, pp. 147-8.
69. John Middleton Murry, Son of Woman: the Story of D. H. Lawrence (London: Cape, 1931), pp. 21-2. (Hereafter cited as Son of Woman).
70. Ibid., p. 38.
71. See Stephen J. Miko, Lawrentian Aesthetic, p. 29.
72. Ibid. For more treatment on Cyril's homoeroticism see Julian Moynahan, Deed of Life, pp. 9-10, and John Stoll, Search for Integration, p. 29.
73. Lawrentian Aesthetic, p. 29.
74. John Worthen holds that Cyril's appreciation of George's beauty in the bathing scene suggests his attraction 'not just to the beauty of George's body but to an ease and unthinkingness which he himself never experiences' (see Early Years, p. 157).
75. Julian Moynahan, Deed of Life, p. 19.
76. John Stoll, Search for Integration, p. 25.

77. Deed of Life, p. 19.
78. Ibid.
79. 'Laetitia', p. 347.
80. Ibid., p. 345.
81. I regret being unable to consult the manuscript from which the first edition of The White Peacock was set. This manuscript is now in the Manuscripts Department of Nottingham University Library. During the time I was engaged in writing this study the manuscript was in the possession of Mr George Lazarus who, because of his old age, was unable to help any scholar interested in it. Any conclusion I draw about this manuscript is based only on its deleted passages recorded in the section 'Explanatory Notes' - pp. 355-97 - of the 1983 Cambridge edition of The White Peacock. (The manuscript from which the first edition of The White Peacock was set is hereafter cited as 'Nethermere' II).
82. 'Nethermere' II, leaf 195.
83. Lawrence deleted from leaf 112 of 'Nethermere' II the original paragraph in the chapter 'The Father': 'I noticed that after this Lettie had occasionally her hours of profound thoughtfulness and sadness. Mother had told her more than I ever knew of my father and of their marriage.'
84. Search for Integration, p. 39.
85. Ibid., p. 28.
86. Early Years, p. 148.
87. Immediately after her words to George in Chapter III - 'As for me, the flower is born in me, but it wants bringing forth' (WP 28) - Lettie confesses how much she has suffered as a child as a result of her parents' unhappy marriage.
88. See James T. Boulton and Warren Roberts, General Editors' Preface to the Cambridge Edition of the Letters and Works of D. H. Lawrence, in The White Peacock, by D. H. Lawrence, ed. Andrew Robertson (Cambridge, 1983). pp. vii-vii (p. vii).
89. I am indebted to Andrew Robertson for this and other observations of the same nature.
90. See Andrew Robertson, ed., 'Explanatory Notes' on WP, in The White Peacock, by D. H. Lawrence (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 355-97 (pp. 360 n.28:38, 363 n.43:23, 369-71 n.82:23). (Hereafter cited as Robertson's Explanatory Notes on WP).
91. See 'Nethermere' II, leaves 213-5.

92. Emily and Lettie call George, Leslie, and Cyril 'brutes', 'horrible', 'barbarians' (WP 51-2). Marie's verdict is that men are 'mean' (WP 77). Whereas, to Lady Chrystabel, Annable is 'her animal - son animal - son boeuf' (WP 151).
93. Lettie calls men 'great infants' (WP 75), and Leslie a 'naughty child', a 'stupid boy' (WP 77).
94. In the chapter 'Pisgah' George says to Lettie: 'Marriage is more of a duel than a duet. One party wins and takes the other captive, slave, servant - what you like. It is so, more or less' (WP 301).
95. Stephen J. Miko, Lawrentian Aesthetic, p. 31. For more treatment of the 'happy' Emily-Tom relationship see Jessie Chambers, Personal Record, p. 119, Marko Modiano, Domestic Disharmony, p. 51, and Carol Sklenicka, D. H. Lawrence and the Child, (Columbia: U of Missouri P, 1991), p. 58. (Hereafter cited as Lawrence and the Child).
96. On 30 July [-3 August] 1908 Lawrence wrote to Blanche Jennings of his intention to 'stop up the mouth of Cyril - I will kick him out - I hate the fellow....I *will* leave out Cyril, the fool' (see Letters, i (pp. 65-9) p. 69).
97. In Chapter III, Part III Emily writes to Cyril: 'I have begun to write a story - - -' (WP 261).
98. Alastair Niven holds that '[t]he only relationship Cyril forms, since Emily is so shadowy a figure is with George, to whom he acts as an intellectual mentor' (see D. H. Lawrence: The Novels, p. 23).
99. Ibid.
100. For Emily's disapproval of Cyril's relationship with George and Alice see WP, pp. 160, 178-9.
101. For more on Schopenhauer's influence on Lawrence's views on love and marriage during the years he was writing The White Peacock see Jessie Chambers, Personal Record, pp. 111-2, 133-4.
102. See John Worthen, Introduction to The White Peacock, by D. H. Lawrence, ed. Alan Newton (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982), pp. 11-33 (p. 27).

CHAPTER FOUR

THE ARTIST'S COMPLEX RELATIONSHIP WITH WOMEN AND HIS QUEST FOR SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND IDENTITY IN THE TRESPASSER1. RELATING DIFFERENCES: TRACING THE THEMATIC LINK BETWEEN THE WHITE PEACOCK AND THE TRESPASSER

For the most part of 1910 Lawrence was writing two novels simultaneously, which at first sight do not seem to have much in common: 'Nethermere' and 'The Saga of Siegmund'. The former work was initially begun five years earlier, whereas for the latter he had put pen to paper for the first time by the beginning of that year. 'Nethermere', eventually called The White Peacock, is the first of Lawrence's Nottinghamshire novels. The setting of 'The Saga', later called The Trespasser, has nothing to do with the country of the novelist's heart. In the first novel the story is told by an omniscient narrator whose perceptions and attitudes are always prevalent. In the second book Lawrence employs the third-person method of narration, thus succeeding in depicting a more objective picture of the main hero's predicament. Cyril Beardsall is Lawrence's first major artistic *alter ego*; part of this protagonist's story is a fictionalised version of the author's early life-experiences. The Siegmund MacNair figure, on the other hand, is largely based on someone Lawrence never saw or met personally: Herbert Baldwin Macartney, who was the lover of Lawrence's Croydon colleague and intimate friend Helen Corke.

Cyril and Siegmund differ from each other also from their perception of and attitudes towards their native places. In spite of his close attachment for Nethermere, Cyril is always aware of its inertia, and by the beginning of Part III exiles himself to South London. Siegmund is not a provincial artist but a Londoner by birth. At times he considers going to 'a foreign land': America, Canada.¹ Yet such intentions are never taken seriously. Unlike Cyril, Siegmund does not think of his native place as inert. Even when he is finally defeated by life Siegmund does not feel he is a stranger in his birth-place.

The fact that Lawrence makes Siegmund from the first a professional artist is probably one of the most important differences between this character and Cyril. By making Siegmund a professional violinist Lawrence succeeded in avoiding much of the mystery shrouding Cyril's economic condition and means of living. Cyril does not face any financial hardship, but how he earns his living is never explained. Like many other early Lawrentian artistic *alter egos*, Cyril has no obvious occupation, and his 'marvellous' doings² in London remain enigmatic and 'dubious'. On the other hand, Siegmund is said to be a bread-winner from the age of seventeen. A musician by trade, he is one of the first violins of the Covent Garden Opera Orchestra. What he earns as an instrumentalist, however, is hardly enough to support the family. Such being the case, he has to give private lessons in music.

Cyril's and Siegmund's relationships with and attitudes towards women make for yet another aspect of these artistic figures' differences. Although in his forties, Cyril is still a bachelor at the close of The White Peacock. Throughout the Nethermere years he has a girlfriend - Emily - and their relationship does not come to an end after his exile. Nevertheless, Cyril does not marry her. Nor does he ever think of marrying any other woman. Cyril views women mainly as domineering wives and possessive mothers. Unlike Cyril, Siegmund is caught in the 'matrimonial trap' at a very early age. As a married man, though, he is as unhappy as any of the several victimised husbands in The White Peacock. All the same, his mismarriage hardly turns Siegmund into a misogynist. Having failed once, he turns again to another woman. Unlike Cyril, Lawrence's second major artist considers women as indispensable to his being.

What sets Cyril and Siegmund apart, however, does not necessarily make them unrelated characters. After all, what binds these two protagonists together is more important than what they do not share. Cyril and Siegmund are artistic kindred spirits, and it is the exploration of this 'kinship' which elucidates further the thematic connection between The White Peacock and The Trespasser.

2. ESTABLISHING THE ARTISTIC 'KINSHIP' BETWEEN SIEGMUND AND CYRIL

Although the thematic relations between Lawrence's first two novels have been largely acknowledged, the interrelationship between the principal artistic figures in these works remains to be explored. Evidencing and investigating what Cyril and Siegmund share as well as what they do not have in common bring more to the fore the confessional, exploratory and therapeutic aspect of Lawrence's early writing.

In the second novel Lawrence faces his own problems - personal and artistic - more squarely than ever before. The portrait of Siegmund indicates that, in spite of his tragic end, this artistic figure is more successful than Cyril in his quest for self-knowledge. Siegmund emerges as a more courageous and optimistic figure than Cyril because he chooses to confront what Cyril is always meticulous to avoid. Siegmund's endeavours, however, have often been ignored, and he is usually considered as a tragic protagonist at heart. Apparently his eventual suicide eclipses considerably his efforts in life. Yet this is not the only reason why this artist's quest is usually seen as leading nowhere. Commentators tend to see only the gloomy, pessimistic aspect of this character also because he is usually compared to his two partial kindred spirits: Cecil Byrne and Hampson.

Although Lawrence employs Cecil and Hampson partly to highlight Siegmund's weak points, the two characters reveal also the new writer's difficulties to part with the Cyril figure. Like Cyril, both Cecil and Hampson are too good at lecturing others on what they should do and avoid in life. Cecil Byrne's didactic tone, for instance, suggests that he shares more than the initials C.B. with Cyril Beardsall.³ Likewise, Hampson's boasting of being 'a tremendously busy man', his tendency 'to run away', and especially his strong condemnation of spiritual women's aim to suppress and 'destroy the natural man in us - that is, us altogether' (*Tr* 112), parallel in many ways Cyril Beardsall's opinion of women.

Lawrence tries to justify Cecil's and Hampson's knowledge of women's complicated nature by presenting them as involved in life, and not as outsiders like Cyril. All the

same, Cecil's and Hampson's life-experiences and wisdom are presented as an end result. These two figures are seen so briefly in the novel - the former makes his appearance in the prologue and epilogue chapters, and the latter crops up from nowhere and disappears in Chapter XIII - that it is difficult to consider them 'whole' as protagonists. Their actions and wisdom are imposed on them rather than presenting a convincing picture of their intrinsic selves.

Siegmund, on the other hand, does not display Cecil's and Hampson's maturity. Yet he is more alive than they. Unlike Hampson, making a mistake earlier in life does not deter him from making fresh attempts to establish a satisfactory rapport with women. Siegmund wants to find a friend in Helena, not play the wise father figure to her, as Cecil does in the final chapter of the book. Although he dies in the end, Siegmund grows considerably because of his own mistakes and experience.

Attempts have been made to highlight Siegmund's weak points, and for that matter to trace the beginnings of this figure by comparing and contrasting him with some protagonists in The White Peacock. It is worth mentioning, however, that cases are few when critics have tried to find out if Siegmund and Cyril are comparable figures. There is a theory that Leslie, not Cyril, is the precursor of Siegmund,⁴ and the reasons for this interpretation are obvious. In his first novel Lawrence introduces not only one *alter ego* - Cyril - but several partial self-portraits, and Leslie is obviously one of them. The marital status of both Leslie and Cyril makes the former a more likely kindred spirit of Siegmund. Whilst Cyril remains a committed bachelor to the end, Leslie woos and marries Lettie. But the main reason why Leslie is often viewed as the most important forerunner of Siegmund in the first novel is apparently linked with the importance critics attach to a lapse Lawrence made while rewriting 'Nethermere' for the last time from 21 January to 11 April 1910. Lawrence included the name 'Siegmund' accidentally on three occasions in this manuscript of The White Peacock. Lettie calls Leslie 'Siegmund' three times in Part III: twice in Chapter II and once in Chapter III.⁵

While it is true that the misnomer suggests that Lawrence had begun to write about the predicament of Siegmund before finishing the first novel,⁶ the lapse could have hardly been instigated by Leslie. Apart from the fact that Siegmund's name is uttered by Leslie's wife, this lapse does not reveal anything essential about Leslie's character which would lead us to conclude that he reminded Lawrence of Siegmund or vice versa. From the first Lawrence made Siegmund a very sensitive lover and admirer of Helena and nature; something hardly seen in Leslie in any version of The White Peacock. Cyril Beardsall is the only character in the first novel who displays elements of Siegmund's complex sensitivity and of his efforts to understand himself.

The accidental inclusion of the name 'Siegmund' in 'Nethermere' II is an indication of Lawrence's intention not to make a Siegmund out of Leslie but a Helena out of Lettie. Apparently, Lawrence saw Lettie as being nearer to Helena than any other woman in The White Peacock.

Probably one of the reasons why Siegmund's 'kinship' with Cyril has not been addressed by scholars for so long is because Lawrence did not make explicit remarks about Siegmund's autobiographical nature as he did with Cyril, to whom he referred more than once as 'myself'.⁷ Nor did he express any apparent annoyance about the Siegmund character which could remind us of his passionate outburst against Cyril the hateful 'fool'.⁸

Lawrence's correspondence of the years when he was busy with The Trespasser reveals that the writing of the novel caused him no less anxiety than that of The White Peacock. Lawrence's decision to 'ignore' the second book for almost sixteen months - from September 1910 to December 1911 - was a manifestation of his uneasiness about the quality of his narrative,⁹ and of his determination to free himself from the influence of the Edwardian tradition of fine writing. As John Worthen concludes, 'the pretentiousness of a voice whose mannerisms had been learned but which was never really his [Lawrence's] own, never issued out of his own past and his own self' was one of the reasons why Lawrence left 'The Saga' aside for so long.

Nevertheless, whether such mannerisms were the only or the main reason that made Lawrence feel 'a naked fool' is debatable.¹⁰ John Stoll points out that 'Lawrence's dislike of The Trespasser is emotional and need not be confined to matters of style alone'.¹¹ The autobiographical element apparent in The White Peacock, and The Trespasser was often the cause of Lawrence's emotional uneasiness.¹² In most cases, however, his anxiety about and emotional dislike for such early works were indicative of the problems he faced and the difficulties he had to put up with in his attempts to project in Cyril and Siegmund his artistic self/selves, concerns, dilemmas, growth, and maturity. In the case of The Trespasser Lawrence was uneasy also because he feared lest the Siegmund character and the book as a whole would be misunderstood and so misinterpreted. Lawrence knew his contemporaries too well to realise in advance that they would be not only unsympathetic but also hostile to an iconoclastic and controversial work like The Trespasser that challenged the long-established taboos about the treatment of sex and marriage.

3. UNDERSTANDING SIEGMUND'S EROTICISM

When The Trespasser was published in 1912 it was largely reviewed as an erotic work.¹³ Since then the 'verdict' has remained more or less the same: eroticism is considered to be at the heart of the novel. The Helena-Siegmund relationship, Helena's rejection of Siegmund, and his eventual death are approached and explained in terms closely related to the protagonists' sexual or asexual orientations.¹⁴

Obviously in his second novel Lawrence pays more attention to the sexual relationship than in The White Peacock. Yet even in The Trespasser eroticism is not the main theme. Nor is it simply a proof of the work's weakness. On the contrary, the artist's physical relations with women make for one of the most interesting aspects of this novel. The importance and the nature of the erotic theme in The Trespasser, however, cannot be properly assessed unless due attention is paid, firstly, to the 'raw material' Lawrence used to write the book, and secondly, to the originality with which he handled that material.

3.1 Helen Corke's Self-Portraits

The writings of Helen Corke Lawrence read prior to and during the time he was busy with The Trespasser¹⁵ differ from the novel in some crucial respects. Such differences are apparent particularly in Corke's and Lawrence's depiction of the protagonists' sexual behaviour as individuals and of their erotic relationship. In her early memoir pieces Corke alludes often to the fact that she is a lesbian, and as such cannot respond to her lover sexually.¹⁶ Corke's lesbian nature is more apparent in her autobiographical novel Neutral Ground which was finished in 1913, but was published for the first time in 1933. I am not suggesting that the book is a memoir like her writings of the 1909-1912 period. Yet, that Corke recorded in this work crucial details about herself is confirmed by other more documentary evidence, and so it is justifiable to use it - cautiously - as a source of information about her intimate life. In Neutral Ground Corke appears as Ellis Brooke.

The novel abounds in clues from Ellis's early life which reveal her latent lesbianism.¹⁷ Ignorant of her lesbian nature Angus, the literary kindred spirit of Helen Corke's lover Macartney, calls Ellis 'odd child',¹⁸ and 'unconventional'.¹⁹ From the first Ellis is aware that no 'physical desire entered into her feelings for him',²⁰ and remains a reluctant sexual partner to the end of their affair.

The attention Corke pays increasingly in her writings - memoirs and fiction - to her lesbianism may be largely explained by the crucial role Lawrence played in making her realise and come to terms with her 'deviant' sexuality. In Neutral Ground Corke refers several times to the role Derrick Hamilton - largely based on Lawrence - plays on Ellis's coming to consciousness, on her understanding that her nature 'represented no standard, but something isolated and exceptional'.²¹

Lawrence showed his sympathy for Helen Corke from the first when he learned of the tragic end of her love-affair. Yet the great attention he paid to her throughout his Croydon years - from January 1910 to January 1912 - was not simply that of a colleague who pities, consoles, and tries to help a grieving friend to overcome a misfortune. Nor did he befriend her only because she appealed to him sexually.

Lawrence became close to Corke, he 'studied' her carefully, because her tragic love story appealed to him personally. This explains not only why The Trespasser as a whole is in many ways different from Helen Corke's experience, but also why Helena Verden differs considerably from the self-portrait/s Corke drew of herself in her memoirs and in Neutral Ground.

The Lawrentian heroine rejects Siegmund's bodily self in several cases, but her behaviour can be explained more in terms of the influences the cultural, social and religious background has on her rather than of her 'deviant' sexuality. Helena's tie with Louisa is not, as a commentator puts it, 'lesbian in nature'.²² These two female characters are not sexually attracted to each other as Corke was to Jessie in reality or Ellis to Theresa in Neutral Ground.²³ Nor does Helena fail to respond to Siegmund's sexual need because she is 'a sort of lesbian Lettie'.²⁴ Moreover, there is no evidence in the prologue and the epilogue chapters of The Trespasser that after Siegmund's death Helena comes to view her previous reluctance for physical relationship as a manifestation of her lesbian inclinations. Unlike Lawrence or Derrick Hamilton, Cecil Byrne's function is not to make Helena realise that it is against her nature to have normal physical relationship with men. Helena's sexual behaviour is often strange, yet she does not stand on neutral ground. To think otherwise is to consider The Trespasser merely a sequel of Corke's writing.

The fact that Helena Verden is not a lesbian indicates that while Lawrence made extensive use of Corke's writings on and oral accounts of her unfortunate personal events, his aim was far from fictionalising the tragic love of her life. Lawrence never meant The Trespasser to be Corke's literary biography. The changes he made to the self-portrait/s Corke drew of herself in her writings give credit to Lawrence's ability during the early years as a writer to employ his own and others' life-experiences to produce fiction. Such ability becomes more apparent particularly in his handling of the Siegmund character.

3.2 Helen Corke's Literal and Literary Image/s of 'Siegmund'

The image Helen Corke draws in several accounts of Macartney is that of a sex-obsessed lover. Although his interest in Corke was not exclusively sexual, sex was what he craved most from her. For five years Corke was constantly aware of 'the tempestuous surface water' of his nature,²⁵ of the light in his eyes, and the restless energy he was 'trying hard to keep under control'.²⁶ Macartney proposed going to the Isle of Wight mainly to realise his 'dream',²⁷ to have both 'Sieglinde [i.e. Corke] and the sea' - 'if only just a little while'.²⁸

Throughout the years Macartney was apparently infatuated by her, Corke saw him as a sick person who needed help 'to cultivate self control'.²⁹ In spite of some faint signs of progress,³⁰ 'the fight with the demands of his desire'³¹ proved to be too much for him. Corke was adamant that her lover took his life because he 'could not bear the physical longing for me': 'I like to think that you were willing to sacrifice the body, because you felt that in the fight between it and your mind, it ignominiously held more than its own.'³²

From the first Lawrence did not share all Corke's views about Macartney's sexual behaviour. Nevertheless, the emphasis Corke put all the time on what she saw as her lover's excessive sexual appetite, was bound to have some impact on Lawrence's interpretation of the protagonists' relationship in his own novel. This is the reason why 'The Saga', particularly in its first part, dealt more explicitly than The Trespasser with the sexual relations of the two lovers. 'The Saga', observes John Worthen, was to a considerable extent 'the story of a sensual man who is attracted to a woman who cannot bear his overt sexuality'.³³ Sieglinde - as Helena was initially called - 'cared not for his body, for the fullness of his thighs, the white, firm plating of his breast'.³⁴ Words such as 'thighs' and 'breast' occur frequently in 'The Saga'. The overtly sexual lexicon of the version indicates that at the beginning Lawrence was paying particular attention to the erotic aspect of the Siegmund-Helena relationship.³⁵

It is worth noting, however, that the overtly erotic passages are not spread throughout 'The Saga'. They are found mainly in part one of the manuscript.

Moreover, even in the first part of this version Lawrence does not always depict the Helena-Siegmund relationship in terms of sexual or asexual attachment. From the first Lawrence departed considerably from Corke's interpretations in her own writings of her personal tragedy. While the protagonists' sexuality is made an important issue in 'The Saga' from the first, it does not become the work's main theme. Helena and Siegmund were well on the way to become a literary couple whose conflicts and interests were becoming increasingly different from those of Corke and Macartney.

3.3 Misunderstanding and Misinterpreting the Erotic in 'The Saga of Siegmund'

The important changes Lawrence introduced to Helen Corke's story indicated clearly that, in addition to the physical aspect of their relationship, the two lovers in 'The Saga' were preoccupied with other equally important problems. Nevertheless, those who saw the novel in a fledgling state concluded that the work was essentially about a sexual relationship. The first to come to this conclusion was Ford Madox Hueffer who in 1910 called 'The Saga' 'erotic'.³⁶ Although Hueffer wrote Lawrence that he himself did not mind erotic art, and that his objection to 'The Saga' was not that the work was 'erotic' but that it was not good art, he seems to have written the novel off mainly because of its controversial subject-matter. As Michael Black puts it, in his second novel Lawrence 'is already bold in his willingness to describe an illicit affair with more sympathy for the sufferings of the sinners than of the righteous'.³⁷ To Hueffer, Lawrence's sympathetic handling of this reprehensible affair was a proof that the writer 'had come under the subterranean - fashionable influences that made for Free Love as a social and moral arcanum'.³⁸

Lawrence suffered badly from Hueffer's criticism of the novel. The editor's labelling of 'The Saga' as 'erotic' made almost for its 'death blow'.³⁹ Under the impact of Hueffer's outspoken rejection and Heinemann's silent disapproval of 'The Saga'⁴⁰ Lawrence 'determined' not to publish the novel; a decision he would stand by until the end of 1911.⁴¹

It would be reductive to interpret Lawrence's decision to suppress the novel as proof of his endorsement of Hueffer's opinion. Lawrence could not afford to ignore Hueffer's remarks not only because by then he was still a relatively unknown writer, but also because he was considering living by the pen. Lawrence knew that at that early stage in his writing career it would have been unwise to put off publishers and readers with 'controversial' works.

If Lawrence himself repeatedly referred to 'The Saga' as 'erotic', 'pornographic' 'love-novel',⁴² and was persistent in his request to Hueffer and Heinemann to have the manuscript back, that was mainly because he was trying to convince himself as well as other people that the work was not what it was taken to be. Lawrence's 'objections' to the novel were something of a cry for help that was finally heard by Edward Garnett. It is not accidental that immediately after receiving Garnett's 'very exciting' letter on 'The Saga' Lawrence asked him: 'Is Hueffer's opinion worth anything, do you think? Is the book *so* erotic?'⁴³

Garnett's appreciation of 'The Saga' convinced Lawrence further that the work's beauty had been largely missed by Hueffer and Heinemann.⁴⁴ Lawrence's main concern when Garnett suggested to offer the work to Duckworth was that he should be presented not 'as a beggar' but 'as a respectable person'.⁴⁵ Apparently, Lawrence was reluctant to be introduced to Duckworth as a poor artist because of the controversial nature of The Trespasser. He was not a poor young man who had written 'a titillating pot boiler'.⁴⁶ Lawrence wanted the publisher to judge the novel for what it was: a dignified work of fiction of a courageous artist.

There is not a single case in which Lawrence referred to The Trespasser as 'erotic' or 'pornographic', or that he hesitated to publish it after he came into contact with Garnett and Duckworth. When Lawrence rewrote 'The Saga' he modified 'the most embarrassing things';⁴⁷ mainly the overt eroticism of the first part. However, even in the second version Lawrence did not drop 'eroticism' altogether. On the contrary, he chose to keep intact some passages which could have fitted into Hueffer's notion of

'bad art'. And in certain cases, as Elizabeth Mansfield observes, Lawrence even 'produced, rather than eliminated' what Hueffer might have called 'erotic' passages.⁴⁸

The erotic theme is pivotal in The Trespasser, and is treated here more outspokenly than in The White Peacock. The attention physical relationships acquire in Lawrence's second novel, however, hardly makes it an essentially erotic book. Sexual fulfilment and failure are important aspects in the Siegmund's relations with Beatrice and Helena. Nevertheless, as this is frequently the case in Lawrence's early writings, even here 'love' means more than 'sex'. A marriage fails and a love-affair ends tragically in The Trespasser but not because of the protagonists' strange sexual or asexual inclinations.⁴⁹ The novel's philosophy is not 'human animalism'.⁵⁰

The Trespasser is Lawrence's first major attempt to explore the relationship between sexuality and the artist. Siegmund's sexuality is an integral part of his artistic temperament, a manifestation of his need for passion. Passionate living is what this artistic hero is after from the first. Unlike Cyril Beardsall, Siegmund is aware that he can live passionately and fully only through women. For him, a woman is more than a sexual partner. The man and the artist in Siegmund strive towards a kind of love that must be both physical and spiritual.

4. THE MOTIVES BEHIND HELENA'S SEXUAL RELUCTANCE

In The White Peacock Lawrence refers only briefly to the dreaming woman and to her tendency to offer her body reluctantly to men. In The Trespasser Helena is made the epitome of this kind of woman from the first. Critics agree that Helena's sexual behaviour is often strange, yet not enough efforts have been made to find out what makes her such an eccentric female figure. It has been suggested that Helena is such an 'extremely reluctant sexual partner'⁵¹ because as a modern woman she is unable to respond to Siegmund's physical love.⁵² It is true that her interest in her lover is not entirely sexual; but nor is it completely asexual. If this aspect of her interest in him is ignored or missed, the very nature of her attachment for Siegmund is bound to be

misinterpreted. Helena is constantly aware of her lover's beautiful physique, and appreciates him 'feature by feature':

She liked his clear forehead with its thick, black hair, and his full mouth, and his chin. She loved his hands, that were small, but strong and nervous, and very white. She liked his breast, that breathed so strong and quietly, and his arms, and his thighs, and his knees. (Tr 57)

...

She liked his naked throat, and his shirt-breast, which suggested the breast of the man beneath. She was extraordinarily happy, with him so bright. (Tr 75)

Much of Helena's pleasure comes from Siegmund's presence. Yet her happiness goes beyond that. Helena is a passionate woman. Unlike Lettie, she feels excited not simply by contemplating her lover's male beauty. Helena displays an overt interest in the actual physical contact; she is neither shy nor reluctant to feel Siegmund's well-shaped body. In fact at times Helena seems to be more interested in touching him than he is in her. In most cases it is Helena who touches Siegmund first: often she leans and rests her head against his shoulders (Tr 61), or slides into his arms (Tr 68). Lying upon his breast she dreams 'how beautiful it would be to go to sleep, to swoon unconscious there, on that rare bed' (Tr 64). And she would cherish the same dream to the last moment they are together:

Helena leaned her head upon the breast of Siegmund, her arms clasping, under his coat, his body which swelled and sank gently, with the quiet of great power.

'If,' thought she, 'the whole clock of the world would stand still now, and leave us thus, me with the lift and fall of the strong body of Siegmund in my arms....' (Tr 148)

The novel is full of such passages that evoke the patterns of the late nineteenth-century romantics. The frequent references to the two lovers' intense relation make The Trespasser often sound like a Keatsian work. The sensuality of The Trespasser echoes much of the sensuality of Keats's early poems, of the poetry of Swinburne, and of the poets of the 1890s. In his second novel Lawrence attempted to render in prose what poets before him had succeeded in conveying in verse. This explains why The Trespasser often reads as a long narrative poem about passion, sexual fulfilment and frustration. Siegmund and Helena are equally passionately in love, yet it is Helena's

sensual nature that Lawrence highlights most throughout the novel. She is always the first to crave a kiss:

She put her arms round him, reached up her face yearningly for a kiss. (Tr 60)

...

Suddenly she strained madly to him, and, drawing back her head, placed her lips on his, close, till at the mouth they seemed to melt and fuse together. (Tr 64)

...

Suddenly, as they stood, she kissed him, clasped him fervently, roused him till his passion burned away his heaviness, and he seemed tipped with life, his face glowing as if soon he would burst alight. (Tr 86)

...

Resting herself on her hands, she kissed him, a long, anguished kiss, as if she would fuse her soul into his for ever. (Tr 103)

Each of Helena's passionate displays, though, has more or less the same end: kissing marks the climax of her happiness as well as the beginning of her depression. Often after kissing Siegmund she is 'exhausted' (Tr 64), disturbed, and increasingly determined to show restraint. Having kissed Siegmund 'a long, anguished kiss', 'she rose, sighing, sighing again deeply. She put up her hands to her head and looked at the moon. "No more," said her heart, almost as if it sighed too: "No more!" (Tr 103)

This obvious change in Helena's mood after almost every kiss has been interpreted in different ways. Some commentators hold that the heroine's intense irritation reflects how much she is under the impact of her social and cultural upbringing. To Colin Milton, Helena's uneasiness mirrors the 'powerful instinctive revulsion' reinforced over many generations of women who reject the 'animal' in humanity.⁵³ Like several other scholars, Milton believes that Helena's instinctive revulsion is closely linked with her religious beliefs.⁵⁴ She is thought to be 'a Christian innocent',⁵⁵ a Madonna⁵⁶ who is, in Nietzsche's phrase, 'physiologically false', for the same reason that Miriam in Sons and Lovers is reluctant to have sex with Paul Morel: the natural responses of both heroines are thought to have been overlaid by ascetic and puritanical feelings.⁵⁷

It is true that Helena's sexual behaviour is affected by her social and religious upbringing. Since he was young Lawrence was critical of dogmatic interpretations of religion. By the time he went to Croydon, however, Lawrence became more articulate

about what he thought had gone wrong in religion. Lawrence started reading Nietzsche shortly before he began 'The Saga of Siegmund', and the philosopher's views on the impact 'organic memory' (tradition) and Christianity have on subduing people's natural instincts served Lawrence as a welcome confirmation of what he had been thinking on his own earlier on such issues.

In The Trespasser, though, Lawrence is still unable to handle the restrictive impact tradition - social, religious - exerts on people (women in particular) with the same clarity apparent in Sons and Lovers. Helena hardly displays Miriam's religious intensity. Although Helena is impressed by the Christian pathos and yearning, the novel offers not enough evidence to conclude that she opposes sex for the same overt religious reasons as Miriam. Helena emerges neither as a nun nor as an ascetic of the Miriam type.

Occasionally Helena perceives Siegmund as a 'holy person' 'whose touch was keen with bliss for her, whose face was a panorama of passing God' (Tr 125), and he is aware that she 'believes in me as if I had the power of God' (Tr 162). Nevertheless, Helena hardly thinks of her lover as a kindred spirit of Jesus. She does not see a Christ in him. If she displays signs that she is willing to sacrifice herself to Siegmund, this self-sacrifice is not motivated by the same Christian motives or personal targets as Miriam Leivers's sacrifice to Paul Morel. If Siegmund is god at all he is a pagan god; and if he worships any deity, he is first of all 'a happy priest of the sun' (Tr 89). As Stephen Miko puts it, throughout The Trespasser God appears in a 'pantheistic rather than anthropomorphic guise'; his name is seldom uttered by the characters, and 'when they do they are self-conscious as well as somewhat doubtful about his nature'.⁵⁸ When the protagonists think about *god* and its nature - whatever they mean by god - their line of thought is more that of philosophically-minded people rather than of pious believers. Rather than theology, they discuss music, poetry and fiction, and their interests in philosophy include Nietzsche.

Likewise The Trespasser offers no ample evidence to conclude that Helena's sexual reluctance is indicative of her lesbianism. Those commentators who see a lesbian in

Helena⁵⁹ apparently interpret her behaviour in terms of the self-images Helen Corke drew of herself in her writings. Not only does Helena Verden admire Siegmund's physical beauty and strength, and is always willing to kiss him passionately, but also enjoys seeing how equally passionately he responds to her advances. She is 'hurt' and 'crushed' by his embrace but at the same time this is 'pain delicious' to her: 'It was marvellous to her, how strong he was, to keep up that grip of her like steel. She swooned in a kind of intense bliss' (Tr 63-4).

The language Lawrence employs to describe Helena's appreciation of Siegmund's physique and her enjoyment of passionate moments with him, however, is indicative also of her uneasiness. The Trespasser marks an important development in Lawrence's handling of the narrative to depict the complexity of characters' antagonistic feelings. Words like 'hurt', 'crush', 'pain', 'grip' and 'steel' often used to describe how Helena perceives her sexually aroused lover show that she enjoys but also fears his passion. It is more through such words rather than through what Helena tells Siegmund that we learn that she misunderstands and misinterprets his sexuality.

Helena is the first of those Lawrentian female figures who suffer because they think men see them mainly as sexual beings. What Helena dreads most when Siegmund is a 'tense body of flesh, without a mind' (Tr 63) is lest he uses her simply as an instrument to satiate his erotic needs. She comes to view him mainly as an 'egoistic' being. This is why her heart 'leaped away in revulsion' (Tr 64) when they make love; she thrills beneath his mouth 'like a violin under the bow' and shudders from his moustache (Tr 64).

Helena observes that Siegmund is happy after love-making. She rejoices at his 'sacred' stillness and peace (Tr 69) because she knows that she is the provider of the tranquillity he enjoys. She gives him 'this new, soft beauty. She is the earth in which his strange flowers grew' (Tr 69). She had 'created' (Tr 70) this Siegmund.

But while Helena is happy to notice the positive impact she has on Siegmund, she is also equally uneasy as a result of it. Her observations of his happiness and tranquillity make her 'quiver' with pain. She observes that after passionate moments Siegmund

'was beyond her...and did not need her' (Tr 70). Whenever he is restored he becomes something of an enigmatic person for Helena who:

wondered at him, he was so different from an hour ago. How could he be the same! Now he was like the sea, blue and hazy in the morning, musing by itself. Before, he was burning, volcanic, as if he would destroy her....He was so strange to her, so different from herself. What next would he ask of her, what new blossom would she rear in him then. He seemed to grow and flower involuntarily. She merely helped to produce him. (Tr 69)

This calm and incomprehensible Siegmund makes Helena uneasy, 'restless'⁶⁰ because, to her, it implies not only that he is completely unaware of her presence, but also that he is altogether beyond her influence. To Helena, a Siegmund satiated is a Siegmund lost. Hence she would inevitably consider sex as the main reason for becoming insignificant to him. Moreover, Helena is inclined to view sex as the greatest threat to the influence she would like to have on Siegmund. She comes to believe that it is because of sex that sometimes she loses her grip on him. This is apparently the loss that Helena finds most difficult to come to terms with.

Helena is not different from Lettie and Emily in her desire to have absolute control over men. What distinguishes her from her domineering predecessors in The White Peacock is that she wants to have Siegmund under her thumb because she needs him as much as he needs her. Helena poses a serious threat to the freedom of her artistic lover much in the same way as Emily does to Cyril. In The Trespasser, however, Lawrence makes the danger much more prominent than in other previous works. Helena marks the real emergence of possessive women in Lawrence's *oeuvre*.

5. THE POSSESSIVE AND DREAMING WOMAN AND THE ARTIST

Helena's tendency to possess Siegmund has been largely acknowledged.⁶¹ Yet the conflict ensuing in their relationship as a result of her treatment of him is rarely seen as that between a possessive and domineering woman and an artist. Their clash is often interpreted in terms of the contradictions between a lover and his 'dreaming' and 'spiritual' woman who finds it impossible to accept and tolerate his overt sexuality. The

ambiguity in which Lawrence sometimes shrouds Helena's sexual attitudes as well as some equally ambiguous generalisations he often makes about her character tend to eclipse somehow the woman-artist conflict in The Trespasser. In Chapter IV, for instance, 'exhausted' from Siegmund's passionate embrace, Helena 'drew away her lips' because:

She belonged to that class of 'Dreaming Women', with whom passion exhausts itself at the mouth. Her desire was accomplished in a real kiss....For centuries, a certain type of woman has been rejecting the 'animal' in humanity, till now her dreams are abstract, and full of fantasy, and her blood runs in bondage, and her kindness is full of cruelty. (Tr 64)

Apparently, Lawrence drew the notion of the 'Dreaming Women' from poets such as Keats, Tennyson, Swinburne, and R. A. Taylor who wrote often about the possessive, spiritual women. The Pre-Raphaelites, particularly D. G. Rossetti, also seem to have influenced Lawrence considerably when he was writing The Trespasser. Helena's melancholy, dreaming eyes, sensuality and cruelty reveal how much she has in common with the Pre-Raphaelite image of woman.⁶²

What distinguishes Helena from such former 'dreaming women' is that she poses a danger not simply to a man but to an artist. It is no accident that Siegmund is warned to be careful in his relationship with Helena by a fellow artist. Apparently, Hampson has become wiser as a result of his own life-experiences with dreaming women. He reveals his own mistakes to Siegmund, so that he would learn from them.

While Siegmund apparently comes to know Helena better after his meeting with the Doppelgänger, we hardly need Hampson to realise the risk a woman like her poses to a creative man. From the start Lawrence pays particular attention to Helena's tendency to possess Siegmund. When they first meet on the island, she 'lay clasped against him', 'clasped him tightly' (Tr 57). From this moment onward 'clasp' is used very frequently whenever Helena embraces Siegmund. So much so that it becomes the staple verb that describes best her intention in touching Siegmund. If other verbs are used in similar situations - hold, press, crush, grasp, cling - their meanings are very much akin to that of 'clasp'. Most of the adverbs used after such clasp-like verbs - tremblingly,

plaintively, ineffectually, fervently, closely - stress further the possessive nature of Helena's embrace:

Putting her arms round his neck, she stood holding his head to her bosom, pressing it close, with her hand among his hair. His nostrils and mouth were crushed against her breast....She stroked and caressed his hair, tremblingly clasped his head against her breast as if she would never release him. (Tr 58-9)

...

'You are so big, I can't hold you,' she whispered, plaintively, catching her breath with fear. Her small hands grasped at the breadth of his shoulders ineffectually....she tried to make her hands meet in the warmth of his shoulders, tried to clasp him. (Tr 63)

...

She felt she should lose him. Clasp him very closely, she burst into uncontrollable sobbing....She pressed her face in his breast...She lifted her face suddenly and pressed on him a fierce kiss. (Tr 100)

Helena's relentless efforts to possess Siegmund physically⁶³ are part of her intention to possess his soul. Apparently, she is interested in his soul more than in his physique. Helena wants to absorb her lover's body and soul to an extent that he would cease being himself:

Suddenly she strained madly to him, and, drawing back her head, placed her lips on his, close, till at the mouth they seemed to melt and fuse together. It was the long supreme kiss, in which man and woman have one being, Two-in-one, the only Hermaphrodite. (Tr 64)

...

Resting herself on her hands, she kissed him, a long, anguished kiss, as if she would fuse her soul into his for ever. (Tr 103)

The fusion of their souls is so important to Helena that to realise this she is willing to offer herself to Siegmund as a sacrifice.⁶⁴ Although she observes that each time she gives in to his sexual demands they are set further apart from one another, Helena is determined to pay any price for the sake of having his soul:

She loved him, was jealous of every particle of him that evaded her. She wanted to sacrifice to him, make herself a burning altar to him: and she wanted to possess him....That night she met his passion with love. It was not his passion she wanted, actually. But she desired that he should want *her* madly, and that he should have all - everything. It was a wonderful night to him. It restored in him the full 'will to live'. But she felt it destroyed her. Her soul seemed blasted. (Tr 87)

Helena's manipulative nature, her tendency to offer herself as a sacrifice for the sake of possessing Siegmund, are the earliest signs as yet of how Lawrence would handle the artist-dreaming woman relationship in Sons and Lovers. It is in passages of this nature that Helena emerges as an embryonic Miriam Leivers.

Helena, however, lacks the resilience Miriam displays after every moment she fails in her attempts to possess Paul. While Miriam remains confident that she would eventually control Paul's soul, Helena acknowledges defeat rather early in the battle for possessing Siegmund spiritually. Moreover, differently from Miriam, Helena is unable to understand that, in the wake of passionate moments, her lover is hardly all the time happy. Helena cannot see that there is 'a good deal of sorrow' in Siegmund's joy (Tr 69), when she offers him herself to sacrifice.

Lawrence has been often criticised, mainly by feminists such as Kate Millett and Faith Pullin, for his misogynist views. His handling of the Helena figure reveals that one does not need to read between the lines to find fault with what is clearly a manifestation of Lawrence's biased handling of women in the early years of his writing career. The message Lawrence conveys in his second novel is that Helena is obsessed by her intention to possess Siegmund, and so fails to grasp what the artist in him expects from her as woman. Helena's misunderstanding and misinterpretation of her artistic lover's passionate nature are among the crucial factors that bring their relationship to a tragic end.

6. THE ARTIST'S PASSION FOR LIFE

Assessing the nature of Siegmund's interest in Helena is probably the key to understanding the problems and worries of this character. It has been suggested that much of Siegmund's uneasiness, as well as his tragic death, are rooted in his overt sexuality.⁶⁵ This perception of Siegmund suggests that commentators often tend to see this character with Helena's eyes. She is usually inclined to see in the aroused Siegmund a sex-obsessed lover, an 'animal' (Tr 126) who is unable to control himself.

Siegmund's interest in Helena, however, is neither completely nor essentially sexual. His contemplation and admiration of her physique is hardly that of a lover who cannot restrain his eroticism:

She wore a white dress that showed her throat gathering like a fountain-jet of solid foam to balance her head. He could see the full white arms passing clear through the dripping spume of lace, towards the rise of her breast....He watched her moving, saw the stir of her white, sloping shoulders, under the lace, and the hollow of her shoulders firm as marble, and the slight rise and fall of her loins as she walked. (Tr 66-7)

The beauty of the Isle of Wight had charmed in the past poets like Tennyson and Swinburne much in the same way as it impressed Lawrence in the summer of 1909. The beauty of the island remained with Lawrence throughout the years he was engaged in writing The Trespasser. This explains largely why this novel is full of passages in which the physical beauty of the characters and nature as well as the brevity of experience are so vividly depicted that one often feels like watching a colourful album of pictures while reading the work. Lawrence employs the word 'to paint' and 'sculpture' the Helena figure much in the same way as the writer of the late Nature tradition. In The Dewy Morn, for instance, Richard Jefferies often depicts female beauty in terms normally used to describe paintings and sculptures.

Helena's portrait above is one of the several cases that indicates not only how the narrator but also how Siegmund perceives her. The male and the artist are inseparable in this character's appreciation of his lover's beauty. Siegmund sees Helena not simply as a woman but also as a work of art. Helena is a 'marble' statue for Siegmund as Annable is for Lady Chrystabel in The White Peacock. Yet Siegmund's perception of and attitude towards Helena are fundamentally different from Lady Chrystabel's treatment of Annable. Lady Chrystabel the painter admires her husband's physique as it reminds her of strong ancient heroes such as Croton and Hercules. Her interest in Annable is not to make love to him but to draw Greek statues of him, and she has had 'a real bellyful' (WP 150) of him once she has enough of them.

For Siegmund the musician, however, if Helena is a 'work of art' at all she is a live 'work of art'. This is beautifully conveyed through the water and moving images. Every part of her body - throat, arms, breast, shoulders, loins - are constantly on the move. The predominance of ing-words - gathering, passing, dripping, moving, sloping - in the passage add more to the agility of this 'living' marble statue whose parts stir, rise and fall constantly. Moreover, unlike Lady Chrystabel, Siegmund's appreciation of his partner's physique goes beyond aesthetic pleasure he derives from contemplating her. Passion is a crucial element in Lawrence's depiction of female beauty in The Trespasser. Unlike Lady Chrystabel, and indeed, unlike Cyril Beardsall, Siegmund considers his sexual interest in Helena as indispensable for a normal relationship. And if this artist feels 'as if his breast were scalded. It was a physical pain to him' (Tr 67) when he looks sometimes at her, this is hardly an indication of his abnormal sexual interest in her rather than of Helena's tendency to thwart his sexuality.

Siegmund's tender treatment of Helena is yet another proof that there is nothing 'animalistic' in his eroticism. Whether she is capricious, reluctant or willing to make love to him Siegmund never displays any sign of brutality. He always treats her 'tenderly' (Tr 60), strives 'almost pitifully' to be tender (Tr 67), and smiles 'gently' (Tr 69) no matter what mood they are in.

It is worth noting that although The Trespasser is apparently about a love-affair, the work is not an explicitly sexual novel. Nor is the sexual act described directly at any time. The physical penetration is missing even in some of the most passionate moments when Siegmund and Helena make love in the cottage or outside:

He sat in the chair beside her, leaning forward, his hands hanging like two scarlet flowers listless in the fire glow, near to her, as she knelt on the hearth, with head bowed down. One of the flowers awoke and spread towards her. It asked for her mutely. She was fascinated, scarcely able to move.

'Come,' he pleaded softly.

She turned, lifted her hands to him. The lace fell back, and her arms, bare to the shoulder, shone rosily. He saw her breasts raised towards him. Her face was bent between her arms as she looked up at him afraid. Lit up by the firelight, in her white, clinging dress, cowering between her uplifted arms, she seemed to be offering him herself to sacrifice.

In an instant he was kneeling, and she was lying on his shoulder, abandoned to him. (Tr 69)

...

They halted on the green hillock, beyond the sand, and, without a word, he folded her in his arms. Both were out of breath. He clasped her close, seeming to rock her with his strong panting. She felt his body lifting into her, and sinking away. It seemed to force a rhythm, a new pulse, in her. Gradually, with a fine, keen thrilling, she melted down on him, like metal sinking on a mould. He was sea and sunlight mixed, heaving, warm, deliciously strong.

Siegmund exulted. At last she was moulded to him in pure passion.

(Tr 83-4)

...

Meanwhile the flowers of their passion were softly shed, as poppies fall at noon, and the seed of beauty ripened rapidly within them. Dreams came like a wind through their souls, drifting off with the seed-dust of beautiful experience which they had ripened, to fertilise the souls of others withal. In them, the sea and the sky and ships had mingled and bred new blossoms of the torrid heat of their love. And the seed of such blossoms was shaken as they slept, into the hand of God, who held it in his palm precious, then scattered it again, to produce new splendid blooms of beauty. (Tr 93)

The 'vague' language of this 'erotic' work has attracted the attention of several critics recently. Michael Black, for instance, holds that if in the first novel the direct depiction of sexual love was discreetly avoided, now in The Trespasser 'Lawrence's figurative language enables him to come closer to the kind of encounter which sooner or later he would have to attempt'. Apparently, Black views Lawrence's extensive use of the 'figurative language' in the second novel as an attempt to make the work seem as uncontroversial as possible.⁶⁶

A. R. Atkins, on the other hand, implies that much of the reticence in the description of the Helena-Siegmund relationship shows that Lawrence did not have access to all Helen Corke's writings when he was busy with the novel, and so was ignorant of many intimate details about her experience with her lover on the Isle of Wight. In Atkins's words, Lawrence 'may therefore have been uncertain whether Corke and Macartney actually slept together during their holiday, unless she told him verbally'.⁶⁷ Considering how close Lawrence and Corke were in those early years, the absence of explicit reference to the sexual act in the novel may also suggest that Lawrence had in mind the sense of decorum, that he was being tactful not to describe his friend in bed. Moreover, although The Trespasser is largely based on Corke's affair

with Macartney, Lawrence's intention was far from giving a faithful description of what had really happened during their stay on the island.

The language of the novel is 'figurative' and reticent not because of Lawrence's insufficient knowledge of the true story. As Michael Bell points out, the language of several passages in The Trespasser 'is not vaguely sexual, it is controlledly so', and the crucial point is that there is no physical consummation in them.⁶⁸ Bell argues that the vague sexual language in such passages reveals that Helena is willing to respond to Siegmund passionately so long as sex is avoided. Referring to the passage in which Helena is described as melting down on Siegmund 'like metal sinking on a mould' the critic notes that she 'gives herself passionately in this final embrace precisely because it is *not* the actual penetration which is suggested in the language', and that it is through such episodes that Lawrence prepares us for the recognition of the lovers' unsatisfactoriness when their relationship comes to be physically consummated at a later point:

In Helena's case particularly, the creation of a sexual rhythm within the language is especially apt. It enables us to register the extent to which she experiences her sexuality as 'sex in the head'. It thereby expresses her absorption of the external world into the rhythm of her feeling.⁶⁹

This 'sexual rhythm' within the language is not less apt in Siegmund's case either. His satisfaction in such passionate moments is as complete as hers, although not for the same reasons. Siegmund is as restored when the relationship is physically consummated as when Helena responds passionately to his embrace. Following one of these passionate moments in Chapter V Siegmund lies 'absolutely still' for half hour:

If she had not seen his eyes blue and dark, she would have thought him asleep. She tossed in restlessness on his breast.

'Am I not uneasy?' she had said, to make him speak. He had smiled gently.

'It is wonderful to be as still as this,' he said....

'Shall we go out a moment, Siegmund,' she asked fretfully.

'Ay, if you wish to,' he answered, altogether willing. He was filled with an easiness that would comply with her every wish....

'It's the finest night I have seen,' said Siegmund. Helena's eyes suddenly filled with tears, at his simplicity of happiness. (Tr 69-70)

Helena's realisation that she is the earth in which Siegmund's 'stillness', 'peace' and 'beauty' have their roots seems like a promising sign that she would soon grow to understand her artistic lover further. In The Trespasser, however, Lawrence is somehow unable to carry the woman's understanding of the artist beyond this point. Helena fails to realise that Siegmund is not restored only after and because of the passionate moments they have together. He is as much elated and restored when he watches the sea foaming perilously as he is with Helena in his arms:

The waves foamed up, as it seemed, against the exposed headland, from which the massive shingle had been swept back. Supposing they could not get by. He began to smile curiously. He became aware of the tremendous noise of waters, of the slight shudder of the shingle when a wave struck it, and he [almost] laughed to himself....The waves struck louder, booming fearfully; wind, sweeping round the corner, wet their faces. Siegmund hoped they were cut off, and hoped anxiously the way was clear. The smile became set on his face.

Then he saw there was a ledge or platform at the base of the cliff, and it was against this the waves broke. They climbed the side of this ledge, hurried round to the front. There the wind caught them wet and furious, the water raged below....The great, brutal water flung itself at the rock, then drew back for another heavy spring. Fume and spray were spun on the wind like smoke....

She glanced up at Siegmund. Tiny drops of mist greyed his eyebrows. He was looking out to sea, screwing up his eyes, and smiling brutally....

Turning suddenly, she plunged over the shingle towards the wide, populous bay. He remained alone, grinning at the smashing turmoil, careless of her departure. He would easily catch her. (Tr 82-3)

Lawrence creates here a 'rhythm' akin to the 'sexual rhythm' of those passages in which Siegmund and Helena embrace passionately but do not consummate their relationship. Unlike Helena, Siegmund enjoys watching the 'brutal' sea. It could be argued that his smiling brutally in this scene suggests almost a death wish as well as suppressed violence born of sexual rejection. On the other hand, the pleasure he derives from contemplating the surging sea also indicates that the passionate man and artist in him has been searching for and finally finds a 'kindred spirit' in the sea. He has always considered the sea 'a fine partner' (Tr 73), and after witnessing the ferocity with which its waves flung themselves to the rock their 'partnership' becomes stronger. Not only Siegmund identifies himself fully with the sea after the storm, but he also considers himself as its master:

'The water,' said Siegmund, 'is full of life as I am,' and he pressed forward his breast against it. He swam very well that morning; he had more wilful life than the sea, so he mastered it laughingly with his arms, feeling a delight in his triumph over the waves. (Tr 88)

Siegmund's passionate nature, his intense desire for passionate experience is also evident in his attitude towards the sun. It is the broiling heat that makes the sun real to him. He regrets the coming of the clouds as they 'devour the sunshine' (Tr 79). His satisfaction from the sun is never complete if 'the sting is missing'. 'I like to feel the warmth biting in,' he tells Helena, 'I like the sunshine on me, real and manifest and tangible....I want to be bitten by the sunshine' (Tr 79). To get 'a sun-soaking' (Tr 116) - which he has always wanted - Siegmund refuses to wear a hat although the sun steams in his hair (Tr 116), and chooses 'the hot sand where no shade was, on which to lie' (Tr 147).⁷⁰

Siegmund's constant searching for and pleasure he derives from passionate contacts and experiences indicate what is most essential about his artistic temperament: his passion for life. Siegmund's passionate nature is conveyed beautifully not only through his craving for passionate encounters and the tranquillity they bring him, but also through the emphasis Lawrence puts on the vitality of Siegmund's heart. Siegmund often becomes heart personified. His heart epitomises his intrinsic passion for life probably better than anything else in the novel. Siegmund's heart beats so 'heavily' (Tr 64) that it makes Helena meditate on 'the heart of the world':

Presently she laid her head on his breast, and remained so, watching the sea and listening to his heart-beats. The throb was strong and deep. It seemed to go through the whole island, and the whole afternoon, and it fascinated her: so deep, unheard, with its great expulsions of life. Had the world a heart? - Was there also deep in the world a great God thudding out waves of life, like a great Heart, unconscious? (Tr 79)

Whatever hope Helena's philosophical questions seem to raise that she might read her lover's heartbeat as a manifestation of the artist's passion for life, for 'intense living', fades in no time. But this hardly comes as a surprise from a character like her. Having

misunderstood Siegmund's interest in her as primarily sexual, Helena is bound to see his heartbeat as yet another expression of his animal-like nature:

The secret thud, thud of his heart, the very self of that animal in him she feared and hated, repulsed her. She struggled to escape....And all the time he held her fast, all the time she was imprisoned in the embrace of this brute, blind creature, whose heart confessed itself in 'thud, thud, thud.' (Tr 126)

Helena interprets every manifestation of Siegmund's passionate nature as proof of his brutality and desire to self-destruct, and never as an indication of his vitality. She is unable to see that Siegmund has nothing to do with the inert. His fulfilment, and indeed, his existence depend on his contact with what is live and energetic. To the end he derives pleasure only from encounters with vigorous manifestations of Life. This is why he never loses interest in London. The city offers this artist the only distraction during the last gloomy moments of his life:

The taxi-cabs, the wild cats of the town, swept over the gleaming floor swiftly, soon lessening in the distance, as if scornful of the other clumsy-footed traffic. He heard the merry click-clock of the swinging hansoms, then the exciting whirring of the motor-buses as they charged full tilt heavily down the road, their hearts, as it seemed, beating with trepidation: they drew up with a sigh of relief by the kerb, and stood there panting, great, nervous, clumsy things. Siegmund was always amused by the headlong, floundering career of the buses. He was pleased with this scampering of the traffic: anything for distraction.
(Tr 168)

The rhythm Lawrence creates with the language of this passage resembles considerably the 'sexual rhythm' of the passages that depict the lovers' passionate embrace, as well as the rhythm of those passages that describe the raging sea. The taxi-cabs and motor-buses resemble the sea waves in their 'scampering' and 'whirring'. The traffic motion and noise fills Siegmund with 'elation' (Tr 169), 'drummed out his own thought' (Tr 168).

Apparently, Siegmund is attached to London almost for the same reason as Cyril Beardsall. Both artists feel close to the city because of its vitality. Cyril 'loved to move in the aimless street's procession' in the morning, 'loved the city intensely for its movement of men and women' (WP 264). Unlike Siegmund, however, for Cyril, London is so attractive because it is a newly discovered world. The city appeals so

strongly to Cyril because it is much livelier than the native narrow world of his youth. In the second novel, Lawrence makes the artist protagonist's attachment for the city part of a larger scheme. Siegmund loves the city for the same reason that he loves to embrace Helena, 'to be bitten by sunshine' (Tr 79), and to watch 'the smashing turmoil' of the waves (Tr 83). For a passionate artist like Siegmund whose heartbeats are so 'strong and deep' (Tr 79) it is natural that he feels so attached to the city of London which is always on the move, always thudding out waves of life.

Siegmund is Lawrence's first passionate artist. Neither Cyril nor any other artistic figure Lawrence created prior to the completion of The Trespasser shows so much interest in passionate encounters and experiences in life. Moreover, Siegmund is the first Lawrentian artist to see women as indispensable for him to have an active and passionate life. The man and the artist in Siegmund view Helena as the 'nerve' through which he hopes to receive 'intelligence of the sun and wind and sea, and of the moon and the darkness' (Tr 76). It is through Helena that Siegmund expects to realise his passionate communion with nature. He aspires to attain his wholeness of being by the agency of a woman as no other Lawrentian artist before him.

While Siegmund is Lawrence's first artist to expect so much from women, he is also the first to experience an unprecedented disappointment. Siegmund's disappointment is both more serious and more convincing than that of Cyril because Siegmund is involved with women much more than Cyril. Siegmund's eventual suicide marks the climax of his despair as a result of his abortive relationships with his wife and lover.

In The Trespasser the failure of the artist-woman relationship becomes a much more complex issue than in The White Peacock. While Beatrice's and Helena's failure to understand the artist in Siegmund makes for the main reason for his tragic end, other factors seem to have affected considerably this artist's relationships with women. One such crucial factor seems to be the impact his mother used to have on him in his childhood.

7. THE ARTIST AND THE MOTHER IN WOMAN

The Trespasser marks the beginning of Lawrence's exploration of the mother-artist theme. Although details about Siegmund's childhood and boyhood are very scarce, the implication is that his mother has been a pivotal figure in his early years:

He remembered distinctly, when he was a child and had diphtheria, he had stretched himself in the horrible sickness which he felt was, - and here he chose the French word - 'l'agonie.' But his mother had seen and had cried aloud, which suddenly caused him to struggle with all his soul to spare her her suffering. (Tr 105)

This is the only case in which the Siegmund-mother relationship is mentioned directly. The passage throws some light on the nature of Siegmund's early relation with his mother. Yet it hardly makes for enough evidence to draw a convincing overall conclusion. This single reference to Siegmund's childhood becomes of interest only if it is studied in the light of other similar incidents Lawrence records in later works, particularly in Sons and Lovers. In the third novel Lawrence transforms the diphtheria scene of The Trespasser into a powerful symbolic turning-point in Paul's relationship with Mrs Morel.

By the end of his life Siegmund makes a curious remark about a man's lifetime need for a mother:

'I used to think that, when I was forty,' he said to himself, 'I should find everything straight as the nose on my face, walking through my affairs easily as you like. Now I am no more sure of myself, have no more confidence than a boy of twenty. What can I do? It seems to me a man needs a mother all his life. I don't feel much like a Lord of Creation.' (Tr 179)

Siegmund's conclusion that a mother (or rather a mother figure) is indispensable in a man's life throws more light on the nature of this artist's relationship with his mother in general. The desperate cry of Siegmund the adult for a mother echoes the need he had felt as a child to have his mother beside him during 'l'agonie'.

In spite of these two symbolic references to the importance of the mother figure in Siegmund's life, the artist-mother relationship in The Trespasser is not tackled with the straightforwardness, depth and clarity seen in Sons and Lovers. After the 'diphtheria'

passage Siegmund's mother is never mentioned again. Such a mysterious disappearance, as well as the mystery in which Siegmund's mother is shrouded throughout the novel, imply that as yet Lawrence is uncertain how to handle the mother-artist relationship. The Trespasser signals no breakthrough in Lawrence's treatment of this theme.

The two apparently unlinked references to the mother's importance in Siegmund's life are significant because they suggest that this artist needs his mother, or rather a woman who could play mother to him, at crucial moments in his life. The child who needed his mother's cry to start his recuperation hardly becomes more strong-willed thereafter. This is what his two sisters and Beatrice think of the seventeen-year-old Siegmund:

"I consider Bertram [Siegmund] will make a handsome man,' said my younger sister.

"He's got beautiful eyes,' said my other sister.

"And a real darling nose and chin,' cried Beatrice. 'If only he was more *solide*. He is like a windmill, all limbs.'

"He will fill out. Remember, he's not quite seventeen,' said my elder sister.

"Ah, he is *doux* - he is *câlin*,' said Beatrice.

"I think he is rather *too* spoony for his age,' said my elder sister.

"But he is a fine boy for all that: see how thick his knees are,' my younger sister chimed in.

"Ah *si si*!' cried Beatrice. (Tr 123)

By then Siegmund 'was mad on the violin' (Tr 123); something which suggests that it was at seventeen that he realised his artistic potential for the first time. Being a weak person, though, he could not embark alone on this new stage in his life. He needed support and encouragement when the artist in him was being born. To some extent, Siegmund was experiencing again something similar to the moment when his life had been endangered by diphtheria. His mother had saved his life then; only a mother-figure would help him now.

It is not accidental that at this crucial moment in his life Siegmund felt attracted to a woman. Likewise, it is significant that this woman was older than he.⁷¹ Siegmund's account of how he and Beatrice came to a silent understanding of each other for the

first time seems to imply something like the signing of a 'treaty of co-operation' rather than the beginning of a love-affair: 'I looked straight at Beatrice, and she at me. We seemed to have formed an alliance in that look: she was the other half of my consciousness, I of hers' (Tr 123). That Beatrice played the violin 'rather well' (Tr 123) also suggests that Siegmund hoped she would be able to understand his artistic nature, and so help him to fulfil his aspirations as a musician.

Contrary to his expectations, though, Siegmund would soon be disappointed in Beatrice. Their first disagreements surface directly after the marriage. Although Lawrence stresses throughout the book what an unhappy couple Beatrice and Siegmund make, not enough is said about the nature of their contradictions. Had Lawrence paid more attention to the impact the mother had on her son in his early years, much about the Siegmund-Beatrice conflict would have been less enigmatic. Lawrence somehow degraded the Beatrice figure, and this is partly because he did not want to annoy Helen Corke. Nevertheless, the novel offers crucial clues that Lawrence saw the root of the artist-wife conflict in the mother's lifetime impact on her son. Because of his mother's influence Siegmund saw Beatrice more as a 'mother' than a 'wife'.

Beatrice, however, was not prepared to play mother to her younger lover. She saw him as a 'husband' who would support her and the children, but not as a weak 'son' who needed her backing to bring his artistic potential to fruition.

Although the book makes no direct mention of any conscious effort on Siegmund's part to 'abandon' the mother, it could be argued that his affair with Helena suggests that he is looking for a new start in his relationship with women; that he is challenging, although rather late, his old image of the mother-woman that seems to have affected his life for so long. That Helena is much younger than he apparently suggests that by now the artist hardly expects to find a mother figure in her.

Helena, however, disappoints Siegmund not less than Beatrice, although for a very different reason. Unlike the wife, Helena enjoys playing mother to Siegmund. The mother and the lover compete constantly in Helena, and in most cases it is the former

who emerges victorious. Siegmund is frequently treated as a child by Helena. She speaks to him softly, gently, as if he was her child whom she must correct and lead' (Tr 65). With Madonna love,

she clasped his head upon her shoulder, covering her hands over his hair. Twice she kissed him softly in the nape of the neck, with fond, reassuring kisses. All the while, delicately, she fondled and soothed him, till he was child to her Madonna....Full of passionate pity, she moved her mouth on his face, as a woman does on her child that has hurt itself. (Tr 129-39)

Siegmund feels increasingly uneasy about Helena's tendency to behave like a mother with him. Yet occasionally he seems to enjoy being her 'child':

He felt stunned, half-conscious. Yet as he lay helplessly looking up at her, some other consciousness inside him murmured 'Hawwa, - Eve - Mother!' She stood compassionate over him. Without touching him, she seemed to be yearning over him like a mother. Her compassion, her benignity, seemed so different from his little Helena. This woman tall and pale, drooping with the strength of her compassion, seemed stable, immortal, not a fragile human being, but a personification of the greater motherhood of woman.

'I am her child, too,' he dreamed, as a child murmurs unconscious in sleep. He had never felt her eyes so much as now, in the darkness, when he looked only into deep shadow. She had never before so entered and gathered his plaintive masculine soul to the bosom of her nurture. (Tr 103)

Siegmund's temptation to accept Helena's motherly behaviour towards him is a clear indication of the confusion the artist feels about the woman's role as mother and lover. This confusion, or perhaps the lack of resolution, as Stephen Miko puts it, 'belongs not only to the characters but to some extent to the author'.⁷² In his first two novels Lawrence tried to find out the answer to what was probably one of the most important problems facing him in these early years. For a young man like Lawrence whose mother had played simultaneously such a formative and restrictive influence in his early life as man and artist, the exploration of the mother-woman theme would mean more casting off of his mother and adopting a new attitude to women. No matter how much he succeeded in freeing himself from the influence of Lydia Lawrence, this extraordinary woman never left Lawrence completely. Nor was he willing to part completely with her. What Lawrence attempted to do in his early fiction, but particularly in The Trespasser, was to depict a female protagonist who could be to the

artist both mother and lover without conflicting or negating each other. Siegmund's inclination to view and accept Helena as his mother and himself as her child is a clear indication of Lawrence's experimenting with his notion of the role a woman could play in the life of an artist.

The new notes apparent in Lawrence's handling of the artist-woman theme in The Trespasser mark a departure from The White Peacock. Unlike Cyril Beardsall who views the mother and Emily as completely separate, Siegmund tries to find both the mother and the lover in one and the same woman. Apparently the 'merger' allows Lawrence for the first time to explore the important role women could play in the life of an artist. Siegmund is Lawrence's first artist who views women as an indispensable stimulus in his life.

8. THE WISHFUL THINKING BEHIND THE ARTIST'S NOTION OF WOMAN AS A 'PRESENCE'

In The Trespasser Lawrence celebrates the kind of life Walter Pater wrote much about: a life which is short and surrounded with the mundane, but which nevertheless is worth living when lived passionately. Only the idyllic holiday offers Siegmund the chance to enjoy the passionate life he has always dreamed of. For him the new experience is something 'like the magic tales': 'I am transported to a new life, to realise my dream. Fairy tales are true after all' (Tr 72). Siegmund wants 'nothing more, and nothing different' because what he experiences on the island 'is about perfect', the 'extreme of a decent time' (Tr 120).

Apparently much of Siegmund's happiness derives from being in such close contact with nature. He has missed the sunshine and the sea for many years; now he has the chance to enjoy them to the full. Like Cyril, Siegmund is able to 'read' and 'talk' to the clouds, birds, flowers. Nature brings out the romantic in him as much as it does in Cyril. In The Trespasser, however, while the artist's perception of nature continues to be increasingly symbolic it does not become over literary. Lawrence succeeds in shedding much of his first novel's literariness in the second book.

In The Trespasser the artist's perception is romantic without being overcharged with literariness partly because Siegmund is significantly more courageous and successful than Cyril in mixing with people, women in particular. While Siegmund at times sounds as artificially romantic as Cyril, yet his romanticism is more acceptable because it results a great deal from the vital impact Helena has on him. The fundamental difference between the rapport Cyril and Siegmund establish with nature consists in the fact that if the first helps others, Emily in particular, to establish communion with nature, in Siegmund's case he communes successfully with nature mainly through the agency of Helena. She is the main source his 'perfect happiness' comes from; she gives him 'the only real happiness I have ever known!' (Tr 163). Throughout the novel Siegmund repeats more or less the same refrain: Helena has 'altered everything' (Tr 90) for him. If prior to the holiday he has 'only rubbed my bread on the cheese-board...Now I've got all the cheese - which is you, my dear' (Tr 120). Shortly before leaving the island Siegmund is as confident as ever that she is 'everything' (Tr 140) for him.

Obviously there is something incongruous and pathetic about these love declarations. The image one draws of Helena from Siegmund's protestations of love hardly fits this figure whose capricious, unpredictable, and sometimes cold attitudes towards him are evident throughout their stay on the island. The incongruity between what Siegmund professes about Helena and the grim realities of their relationship has often baffled critics. The tendency so far has been either to overlook or dismiss largely such incongruity simply as one of the weak points of the book. Alastair Niven, for example, argues that:

[Lawrence] establishes Siegmund's adulterous passion for Helena as a fact but makes little attempt to demonstrate what it is founded upon. The mechanical nature of Siegmund's working day, the martyred attitude of his wife, 'the grave, cold looks of condemnation from his children' (Tr 54) obviously show his need to escape, but they do not in themselves explain why Helena Verden so enchants him. Critics must beware of being too literal, but Lawrence asks too much of us if he intends the sheer ecstasy of the language to carry all before it.⁷³

Although Niven seems to be aware of the risks of being too literal, much of his argument about the incongruity apparent in Siegmund's attachment for Helena comes from his literal approach. By over-emphasising the escape aspect of the affair, the critic hardly views Siegmund's relation with Helena as an attempt to make a new start. Like some other commentators, Niven seems to lose sight of Siegmund the artist because he pays attention mainly to Siegmund the man. Unless the artist in Siegmund is acknowledged properly, his relationship with Helena is bound to be viewed mainly as an 'adulterous' attachment.

Lawrence is careful to show that Siegmund does not begin the affair because the man in him lost interest in his wife as woman. If passion is reduced to sex, then Siegmund and Beatrice are undoubtedly a passionate couple. The number of children suggests that his wife never stopped appealing to Siegmund sexually. Even now that he is a middle-aged man he is aware that 'men all like her. I bet she'd marry again, in spite of the children' (Tr 123).

But if Lawrence highlights that Siegmund's marriage has never been void of physical passion, he does not represent Siegmund as a husband who can be easily manipulated by his sexual wife; Beatrice displays no animalism of the kind which is obvious in the literal and literary images of Macartney's wife in Helen Corke's writings. While Siegmund enjoys sex with his wife, he also expects more from her. Beatrice's failure to offer her artistic husband more than sexual fulfilment is what leads him to seek to find in other women what is missing in his marital relationship. It is the need for spiritual more than physical pleasure that makes Siegmund start the affair. This is the reason why throughout the novel Siegmund's praising of Helena has little to do with her physical beauty as such:

For him, Helena was a presence. She was ambushed, fused in an aura of his love. He only saw she was white and strong and full fruited, he only knew her blue eyes were rather awful to him. (Tr 57)

Siegmund's referring to Helena as a 'presence' marks a new significant development in Lawrence's handling of the artist-woman relationship. Siegmund views the woman

that appeals to his artistic nature as a symbol rather than as an individuated person. For him, Helena is not 'a woman', but the personification of what he as a creative man expects from 'woman':

When Siegmund had Helena near, he lost the ache, the yearning towards something, which he always felt otherwise. She seemed to connect him with the beauty of things, as if she were the nerve through which he received intelligence of the sun and wind and sea, and of the moon and the darkness. Beauty she never felt herself, came to him through her. It is that, makes love. He could always sympathise with the wistful little flowers, and trees lonely in their crowds, and wild, sad sea-birds. In these things he recognised the great yearning, the ache outwards towards something, with which he was ordinarily burdened. But with Helena, in this large sea-morning, he was whole and perfect as the day. (Tr 76)

Throughout the novel much of the satisfaction Siegmund gets from Helena comes not from passionate moments but from her mere presence: 'She soothed him like sunshine, and filled him with pleasure' (Tr 59) only by being beside him. All he needs from her is simply to be with him. The only thing he would like to tell her before leaving the island is not to go away from him but 'come with me somewhere':

then he might lie down somewhere beside her, and she might put her hands on his head. If she could hold his head in her hands - for she had fine, silken hands that adjusted themselves with a rare pressure, wrapping his weakness up in life - then his head would gradually grow healed, and he could rest. This was the only thing that remained, for his restoration: that she should with long, unwearying gentleness put him to rest. He longed for it utterly, for the hands and the restfulness of Helena. (Tr 191)

Siegmund's insistence on having Helena always near him may look like his old need for mother's presence whereas in fact it marks a new stage in his relationship with woman, a novel understanding of what he as artist expects from her. Siegmund has finally begun to see woman not just as his 'saviour' but also as his 'stimulus' and 'inspiration'. It is the man and artist in Siegmund that view Helena as '[t]he key of the castle' (Tr 71): 'You seem to have knit all things in a piece for me. Things are not separate: they are all in a symphony. They go moving on and on. You are the motive, in everything' (Tr 98-9).

A woman's presence may be important but it is not enough. As it will be explained later in this chapter, what Siegmund thinks and declares about Helena do not often match with her performance as lover. In The Trespasser Lawrence hardly justifies Siegmund's high appreciation of Helena. It seems as if this artist has recently had a vision about woman's role in his life, but what exactly this role is, and how she would accomplish it he does not know yet. His high opinion of Helena reveals more what he would wish her to be rather than what she actually is.

The ambiguity that shrouds Siegmund's attitudes towards women in general and his wishful thinking regarding Helena's impact on his life reflects much of what Lawrence himself thought about women by the time he was writing The Trespasser. From the first Lawrence believed that women would play a very important role in his life. Nevertheless, he was constantly uneasy and undecided when he had to consider committing himself, and none of his early relationships ended in marriage. In spite of several setbacks, though, Lawrence remained optimistic that he would eventually find the woman he wanted, and he expressed much of his optimism in Siegmund's high opinion of Helena.

Apart from this optimistic view of women, however, Siegmund hardly shares anything else with Lawrence. Moreover, even Siegmund's optimism is of a different nature from that of Lawrence. While Lawrence was a dreamer, he always remained a realist. Siegmund, on the other hand, is more of a dreamer than a realist. Furthermore, Lawrence's optimism and realism come from his high level of self-knowledge; he always knew what he wanted in life, and who he was. Siegmund, on the other hand, hardly knows what he wants in life. The only thing this protagonist is certain about is that he cannot do without women, and as such he is always committed to one.

Siegmund's lifelong attachment for women, however, as well as his relationships with them, are hardly completely rewarding. In fact they cause him as much trouble as they bring him fulfilment. To the end of his life this protagonist complains that women fail to understand him. He also admits that he too fails to know them. The mutual lack

of knowledge and understanding brings about the failure of both Siegmund's marriage and love-affair. They also lead this artist to the final desperate act of suicide.

9. INCOMMUNICABILITY IN THE ARTIST-WOMAN RELATIONSHIP

The role women play in the artist's life is one of Lawrence's major concerns in The Trespasser. Siegmund takes interest in, pays attention to, and expects from women more than any other Lawrentian artist before him. Mother, wife, and mistress are all important to Siegmund. Each of them plays a crucial role in his life. These three female characters are not conflicting images of women; they all appeal to certain needs of their artistic son, husband, and lover. They, Helena in particular, are partial representatives of the epitome of the woman Siegmund would constantly wish to find; each of them has elements of the woman this artist would wish to meet.

While The Trespasser offers an unprecedented picture of what a Lawrentian artist's image of a woman is, at this stage Lawrence does not depict as yet any single female character as the epitome of the woman of Siegmund's dream. To the end of the book this image never materialises.

Lawrence has been consistently criticised for 'unfair' treatment of female protagonists in general, and signs of this 'unfairness' are traceable even in his second novel. Siegmund fails on many occasions in his relationships with women. Yet this artist hardly sees himself as being responsible for such failures. On the contrary, Siegmund is presented as being one of those 'supremely unfortunate' artists who are victimised by women. Siegmund's personal tragedy is no different from the tragedy of many artists:

Helena recalled Francis Thompson's poems, which Siegmund has never read. She repeated what she knew, and laughed, thinking what an ineffectual pale shadow of a person Thompson must have been. She looked at Siegmund walking in large easiness beside her.

'Artists are supremely unfortunate persons,' she announced.

'Think of Wagner,' said Siegmund, lifting his face to the hot bright heaven and drinking the heat with his blinded face. All states seemed meagre, save his own. He recalled people who had loved, and he pitied them: dimly, drowsily, without pain. (Tr 92)

Helena's perception of artists as ineffectual, shadowy, and unfortunate persons is indicative of her inability to understand the artist in Siegmund, the motives of his interest in her, and the nature of his uneasiness. Helena emerges here as some of Keats's and Swinburne's heroines who fail to realise how much they mean to their suitors and lovers; La belle dame sans merci and Felise are never far from Helena.

On the other hand, the pity Siegmund feels for unfortunate artists is a manifestation also of the pity he feels for himself. The Trespasser offers enough evidence to conclude that none of Siegmund's women can see the artist in him. They are unable to sympathise with his artistic interests; they do not grow with him:

It was not surprising his marriage with Beatrice should prove disastrous. Rushing into wedlock as he had done, at the ripe age of seventeen, he had known nothing of his woman, nor she of him. When his mind and soul set to develop, as Beatrice could not sympathise with his interests, he naturally inclined away from her, so that now, after twenty years, he was almost a stranger to her. That was not very surprising. (Tr 146)

In spite of her artistic nature and intellectual mind, Helena cannot communicate with the artist in Siegmund. She hardly knows what this artist sees in her: 'Beauty she never felt, came to him through her' (Tr 76). Often Helena has 'no idea' what Siegmund thinks.⁷⁴ His dreams are unknown to her,⁷⁵ and she fails to notice when he is deeply serious,⁷⁶ or when his eyes are 'full of misery' (Tr 138). Siegmund's eyes are 'inscrutable' to Helena, and his facial expression tells her 'nothing' (Tr 151). This woman 'never realised his helplessness' (Tr 160) because most of the time Siegmund is 'foreign' to her (Tr 67), and he would be 'beyond her grasp' to the last moment of their final meeting (Tr 194).

Although he never fails to tell Helena how important she is to him, Siegmund is aware of her inability to understand him. He seems to have realised this before the holiday. This is clearly suggested from the start of the book. The day before the journey to the island:

He ate his bread and cheese mechanically, wondering why he was miserable, why he was not looking forward with joy, to the morrow. As he ate, he closed

his eyes, half wishing he had not promised Helena, half wishing he had no tomorrow. (Tr 51)

During the holiday Siegmund finally confirms what he had known all along: 'She does not understand' (Tr 152). It is there and then that he comes to realise better than ever before the cause of her failure. Helena is one of those early Lawrentian characters that cannot understand others mainly because she is incapable of understanding herself in the first place. The low level of her self-awareness becomes particularly clear if one pays attention to her speech. Often Helena has 'no idea' why she makes some remarks which she herself finds impossible to understand. Stroking the newly-found electric-light bulb she says:

'It is a graceful act on the sea's part....Wotan is so clumsy - he knocks over the bowl, and flap-flap flap go the gasping fishes, pizzicato! - but the sea -!'

Helena's speech was often difficult to render into plain terms. She was not lucid.

'But life's so full of anti-climax,' she concluded. (Tr 84-5)

Helena's inability to 'translate herself into language', to 'render herself to the intelligence' (Tr 143) makes her communication with Siegmund very difficult, and at times almost impossible. Yet Helena is not the only one to blame for the low level of communication. Siegmund may well see her as a member of 'an unknown race that never can tell its own story' (Tr 154). Yet he too is often incommunicable, and unable to tell his own story. Helena finds him 'intractable' (Tr 67) because he is most of the time 'silent' and 'so grave' (Tr 145).

Lawrence attempts to distinguish between Helena's and Siegmund's incommunicability. If Helena cannot communicate because her self-knowledge and coming to consciousness are still at a low level, Siegmund seems to be unwilling to talk to her because he takes it for granted that any attempt to make her understand him would come to nothing. To Siegmund, more than his match, Helena is something of a plaything for whom he feels pity (Tr 104), and responsible (Tr 107). This explains largely why, in spite of their disagreements, he hardly argues with her:

She was so winsome, a playmate with beauty and fancy. Why was he cruel to her, because she had not his own bitter wisdom of experience? She was young, and naïve, and should he be angry with her for that? (Tr 83)

Instead of asking Helena to explain herself when she makes vague remarks, he 'smiled softly at her. She had him too much in love to disagree, or to examine her words' (Tr 85). Siegmund seems to consider Helena like a child whose vague speech should not be taken seriously. Nor should she be told for that matter what is apparently beyond her grasp. This is all Siegmund has to say to her about his important meeting with Hampson:

'I have been talking,' he said.

'Talking!' she exclaimed in slight displeasure. 'Have you found an acquaintance even here?'

'A fellow who was quite close friends in Savoy days - he made me feel queer - sort of Doppelgänger, he was.'

He glanced up swiftly and curiously.

'In what way?' she said.

'He talked all the skeletons in the cupboard - such piffle it seems, now! - The sea is like a hare-bell, and there are two battle-ships lying in the bay. You can hear the voices of the men on deck distinctly. - Well, have you made the plans for today - ?' (Tr 114-5)

In addition to his underestimation of Helena's ability to understand him, Siegmund's sudden change of subject is also a clear indication of his level of self-awareness. Unlike Cyril Beardsall, Siegmund is constantly preoccupied in finding an answer to the question: 'What is myself?' (Tr 116). Yet even this artist's level of self-awareness is still low. Siegmund asks many questions about self but is unable to provide any satisfactory answers. Having caught his thigh on a rock, he meditates watching his blood travel over the bright skin:

'That is I, that creeping red, and this whiteness I pride myself on is I, and my black hair, and my blue eyes are I. It is a weird thing to be a person. What makes me myself, among all these?' (Tr 74)

Already a middle-aged man Siegmund is in the dark not only about his self-identity, but also about his purpose in life. He does not know what he wants (Tr 70), what he can do (Tr 179), what to think of himself (Tr 162): 'Now I am no more sure of myself, have no more confidence than a boy of twenty' (Tr 179). Above all, Siegmund's

greatest trouble is that he is becoming ever doubtful about his potential as creative man. He no longer believes that he has 'a strain of God' in him (Tr 145): 'I don't feel much like a Lord of Creation' (Tr 179).

Much of Siegmund's pessimism results from his frequent failures with women. There are moments when he holds himself responsible for the sad end of the marriage and the affair. Yet in most cases this artist feels that it is women who usually let him down.

Considering how little Siegmund and Helena communicate with each other, however, it is difficult to say how she can be held responsible for the failure of their relation. Helena hardly argues with Siegmund, so that we could realise that she does not understand him, and what is more significant, that she poses a risk to him. Apparently, Lawrence felt the need to find out a way to enhance Siegmund's knowledge of women in general, and of the dangers they pose to him in order to justify this artist's inclination to keep himself to himself. As in The White Peacock even in The Trespasser Lawrence was faced with the task of contriving artificial means through which protagonists could come to consciousness. In the first novel Lawrence employed the rabbits as a device to help unimaginative characters realise the inertness of the valley. In the second book, however, the protagonist who needs to be brought to consciousness is an artist, and so a rabbit-like ploy would be irrelevant. Under these conditions, Lawrence had to introduce a figure who would have many points in common with Siegmund so that he could be in a position to understand and counsel him. Lawrence invented Hampson as a kindred spirit - a Doppelgänger - that tells Siegmund about a woman like Helena more than he could himself learn from her throughout the six years of their relationship.

10. THE CATALYTIC FUNCTION OF THE 'DOPPELGÄNGER' DEVICE

A figure like Hampson who appears and disappears in a single chapter in a complex novel is more of a symbol than a character. Hampson never becomes a character as such. He emerges suddenly to perform a certain function, and once he has carried out

his mission he has to leave the stage immediately. The symbolic status of Hampson becomes clear particularly if one pays attention to the state Siegmund is in prior to the meeting with his artistic kindred spirit. In Chapter XII Siegmund is shocked to realise that he is no longer in control of his own body, and that he has lost contact with everything:

He felt detached from the earth, from all the near, concrete, beloved things; as if these had melted away from him, and left him, sick and unsupported, somewhere alone on the edge of an enormous space. He wanted to lie down again, to relieve himself of the sickening effort of supporting and controlling his body. If he could lie down again perfectly still, he need not struggle to animate the cumbersome matter of his body, and then he would not feel thus sick and outside himself. (Tr 104)

Siegmund 'shudders' in anguish internally, feeling so weak that he has to make 'a concentrated effort of will' to place his foot securely on the step. He is completely unable to explain why he is going through that 'rather deathly' experience (Tr 105), particularly so because he feels no physical pain. Whilst he is trying in vain to find an explanation for this *agonie*-like crisis Helena, who is quite unaware of what he is going through, informs him that they are following a wrong path in the dark:

'I believe we are lost,' Helena interrupted him.

'Lost! What matter!' he answered indifferently. (Tr 105)

For Siegmund 'lost' means something quite different. He hardly knows where he is, who he is, and how he would overcome the impasse. He needs help to realise all these things, but hardly puts any hope in Helena. It is precisely at such a critical moment in Siegmund's life and in his relationship with Helena that Lawrence introduces a 'rescuer'. Hampson criticises and offers Siegmund advice how to handle women, and how to avoid any risk coming from them. Being an artist himself, Hampson draws Siegmund's attention to topics which are of a special interest to Siegmund as creative man and lover. Both the composer and the violinist are 'a good deal alike' and 'have gone the same way' (Tr 112). Hampson speaks from his own experience when he stresses that a creative man always lives a passionate life. It is a speech which fits so well with Pater's advocacy of intense living:

'If you have acquired a liking for intensity in life, you can't do without it. I mean vivid soul-experience. It takes the place, with us, of the old adventure, and physical excitement....A craving for intense life is nearly as deadly as any craving. You become a 'concentré'; you feed your normal flame with oxygen, and it devours your tissue.' (Tr 111)

Hampson believes that women are indispensable for someone who wants to live intensely. To him, they serve as 'a stimulant' for a creative man. The composer, who is aware of Siegmund's artistry, concludes that his 'flame' has gone 'nearly out' because 'the stimulant is lacking' in his life (Tr 111).

Siegmund finds himself under Hampson's spell in no time; the mysterious acquaintance fills him both with 'fear' and 'fascination' (Tr 111). Siegmund is impressed by Hampson not because of the 'newness' of what he says. Nothing in Hampson's speech is news to the violinist. Siegmund looks at Hampson with 'baffled, anxious eyes' because the composer confirms what he too has been thinking about himself and women. Moreover, Hampson 'startles' Siegmund because he could articulate what Siegmund himself has been unable to put into words for so long. Hampson becomes the voice of the inarticulate Siegmund: 'This Hampson seemed to express something in his own soul' (Tr 110); 'The bitter despair in his tone was the voice of a heavy feeling of which Siegmund has been vaguely aware for some weeks' (Tr 113).

Siegmund is not happy with Hampson's assessment of him. Nor does he seem to agree fully with Hampson's opinion on the destructive power of women. Yet the fact that he 'did not disagree with what his friend said, nor tell him such statements were arbitrary' (Tr 112) suggests that, in spite of some differences, Siegmund and Hampson are essentially kindred spirits. They share the same passion for intense living, and both consider women as indispensable and dangerous to them. Moreover, these two artists are equally pessimistic. This last common trait makes it impossible for Hampson to show Siegmund a way out of his impasse. Hampson is good only at predicting Siegmund's end:

'You haven't much reserve. You're like a tree that'll flower till it kills itself....You'll run till you drop, and then you won't get up again. You've no dispassionate intellect to control you and economise....your neck is thick with

compressed life: it is a stem so tense with life that it will hold up by itself. I am very sorry.' (Tr 111-3)

Hampson foresees that Siegmund's death would come as a result of both his weakness and Helena's negative impact on him. It is from Hampson that Siegmund learns for the first time that Helena 'will...help to destroy you' (Tr 113). This is a fateful meeting that would set the two lovers further apart. If prior to this encounter Siegmund 'interpreted her according to his own idea' (Tr 77), after Chapter XIII his judgement of Helena would reflect much of Hampson's influence. For the first time in Chapter XV Siegmund concludes that neither Helena nor any other woman could still his 'crying in the night' (Tr 128). If from the first Helena and Siegmund find it difficult to commune with one another, after Chapter XIII their communication becomes almost non-existent. Instead of talking to each other they prefer to stay alone. Even when they are together they are barely aware of the presence of one another. In the concluding part of the novel, as this is the case throughout the book, monologue prevails over dialogue.

Under the direct impact of Hampson's teaching, Siegmund grows to despise Helena as never before. After the encounter the novel abounds in cases when Siegmund displays an unprecedented violent dislike of her. He hates her voice (Tr 150), her presence (Tr 152), her 'foreignness' (Tr 154). He resents her so much that on their way to London 'his soul surged against her in hatred' (Tr 160).

Hampson's intervention in Siegmund's life affects the Siegmund-Helena relationship more than anything else in the book. Although Hampson makes a very brief appearance, he exerts on Siegmund a very negative influence. It also seems as if it was this gloomy composer who emerges from nowhere and knows too much about people he has never met (Helena), or whom he has met many years ago (Siegmund), that puts the idea of suicide in Siegmund's mind. Hampson's presence marks the beginning of Siegmund's tragic decline. Likewise, it is through Hampson that Lawrence initially introduces in The Trespasser some strong misogynistic remarks that echo

somehow some of the conclusions Cyril Beardsall comes to in the concluding part of The White Peacock.

Hampson's misogyny and his messenger-of-death-like presence affect Siegmund to an extent that he finds it impossible to save his relationship with Helena. Nor is he able for the same reasons to avoid his tragic end. His pessimism, misogynistic remarks, and eventual death make Siegmund such a tragic character that he seems to have made Lawrence very uneasy. Siegmund is probably Lawrence's most tragic hero, and The Trespasser is his most tragic work.

Nevertheless, Siegmund and the book, are not all tragic. Although Lawrence found it difficult to alter Siegmund's tragic end for reasons which will be addressed shortly in the present chapter, in his final moments this figure displays both hope and optimism more than ever before in his life. The book itself also does not end in a final tragic note. Lawrence instilled in the last part of his second novel much of his own optimistic views about life and of his own confidence in the positive impact women could play in the life of a creative man. The Trespasser makes perhaps for a unique case in Lawrence's *oeuvre* in which he seems to urge the reader to believe the artist rather than the tale.

11. OPTIMISM IN TRAGEDY

In his works Lawrence depicts life with all its complexity, and as such tragedy is always present in his art. Nevertheless, the tragic in The Trespasser represents something unique in Lawrence's *oeuvre* as a whole. Siegmund is the only major Lawrentian hero to commit suicide.

Siegmund's death, however, was not Lawrence's choice. Immediately after finishing the chapter in which Siegmund puts an end to his life in 'The Saga' Lawrence told a friend how disturbed he was because of the suicide scene:

I have just hanged my latest hero: after which I feel queer.... - Be thankful you have never to hang your hero. It leaves you with an uncomfortable strangled feeling in your neck, and a desolation of death - below the diaphragm.⁷⁷

Lawrence could do nothing to alter Siegmund's tragic end. The main character had to die in the same way as Helen Corke's lover Macartney had died. From the start Corke felt uneasy as a result of Lawrence's handling of her love-affair in 'The Saga'.⁷⁸ Aware of Corke's growing discontent Lawrence had to be cautious not to irritate her further. Lawrence knew that had he attempted to 'spare' Siegmund's life, that would have been too much a 'distortion' for Corke to tolerate, and so she could have well refused to allow Lawrence to publish the novel.

11.1 The Artist's Love-Hate Attitude Towards Death

Unable to change Siegmund's 'doom' (Tr 113), though, Lawrence was faced with the task of finding how to make the artist seem as little a tragic character as possible. That is, apparently, why sometimes Lawrence portrays Siegmund as an exceptionally optimistic figure. It is not accidental that Siegmund emerges as an optimist particularly in Chapter XIII. Siegmund is greatly affected by Hampson who 'seemed to express something in his own soul' (Tr 110). Nevertheless, Lawrence hastens to show that Siegmund hardly agrees with everything Hampson preaches, particularly with his pessimistic views about life. In response to Hampson's metaphorical postulate that the 'House of Life' is 'confoundedly draughty' (Tr 110), Siegmund remonstrates: 'I'm not tired of the House - if you mean Life'. Lawrence stresses further after Chapter XIII that Siegmund does not share Hampson's pessimism through the frequent remarks he makes that he is happy. Although Siegmund's inevitable drifting towards death is too obvious in the wake of his meeting with Hampson, still he has not a word of blame towards Life as such. To the last moment of his life Siegmund would constantly believe that 'whatever happens', the morning, the world, Life itself are 'very lovely' (Tr 134), and 'wonderful' (Tr 169): 'And I shall miss it all!' (Tr 162)

How Siegmund comes to think so highly about life in general when he has already decided to take his own life, however, remains enigmatic. In an attempt to find an explanation for Siegmund's positive thinking, Lawrence resorts to literariness which undermines the beauty of the narrative at times much in the same way as in The White

Peacock. Lawrence stresses on several occasions that Siegmund loves life because it is both 'kind' and 'pitiful':

Siegmund had always inwardly held faith that the heart of life beat kindly towards him. When he was cynical and sulky, he knew that in reality it was only a waywardness of his.

The heart of life is implacable in its kindness: it may not be moved to flutterings of pity: it swings on uninterrupted by cries of anguish or of hate.

Siegmund was thankful for this unfaltering sternness of life. There was no futile hesitation between doom and pity. Therefore he could submit, and have faith. If each man by his crying could swerve and slow, sheer universe, what a doom of guilt he might gain. If Life could swerve from its orbit for pity, what terror of vacillation: and who would wish to bear the responsibility of the deflection? (Tr 203)

Siegmund's 'pathetic attempt to put together the two aspects of life, which have become impossibly disparate'⁷⁹ is not the only manifestation of Lawrence's attempts to depict this artist as an optimist in his dying moments. In the end Siegmund tries to convince himself that, after all, death is not so terrible. His passion to live is gradually replaced by his desire to die. Eventually life and death become interchangeable for him to the extent that he cannot distinguish them. Siegmund looks forward to dying because he views after-death as a rebirth:

Siegmund sat thinking of the after-death, which to him seemed so wonderfully comforting, full of rest, and reassurance, and renewal. He experienced no mystical ecstasies. He was sure of a wonderful kindness in death, a kindness which really reached right through life, though here he could not avail himself of it. (Tr 203)

Siegmund's gruesome enthusiasm about death and his eventual suicide make his final optimistic remarks on life sound irrelevant and incongruous. In a last-minute effort before Siegmund hangs himself Lawrence tries to interpret his death not as an artist's negation of Life as such, but as the weakness of a husband, a father, a lover who has made a mess of his life and is unable to face the future.

Although Lawrence's intervention is carefully calculated, Siegmund the artist can hardly be separated from Siegmund the family man and the lover. Siegmund's optimism prior to his death, the pleasure he derives in the idea of life in death hardly make him a less tragic figure. On the contrary, they bring more to the fore what is also Cyril

Beardsall's main weakness: the tendency of the early Lawrentian artist who is good at preaching but unable to act.

While he hardly makes any direct remark to denounce Cyril's inactivity, however, Lawrence is eager by the end of The Trespasser to show that he condemns the suicide. This is the reason why in the last three chapters of the book Lawrence stresses many times that the artist's suicide represents no way out for his problems. In taking his own life Siegmund proves that he really is what he admits repeatedly to Helena: 'a failure' (Tr 100), 'a moral coward' (Tr 115) who always 'funked' and 'shirked' whenever he has been in 'a tight corner' (Tr 124).

11.2 Redeeming Beatrice

To express his disapproval of Siegmund's self-destruction Lawrence does not employ moral generalisations which are used frequently in The White Peacock. Unlike Cyril Beardsall, the omniscient narrator in The Trespasser does not preach what the characters should do or what they should avoid in life. Nor are the protagonists engaged in vain talk to show their condemnation of Siegmund's suicide. It is through what characters such as Beatrice and Helena do rather than what they say that Lawrence highlights further Siegmund's weakness as well as the futility of his tragic end. The two women who, according to Siegmund, are unable to understand and sympathise with him as an artist, begin to change considerably immediately after his death. In the final chapter of the book they emerge almost as different characters. Apparently, Lawrence wants to emphasise that part of Siegmund's tragedy comes not so much from women's failure to understand him rather than from his own failure to understand them. Siegmund has taken for granted all his life that women must support him; they must divine his thoughts and feelings as an artist. What he apparently could never realise, however, is that he had to give women a chance to accomplish the task he had ascribed to them.

Beatrice's rapid transformation in the wake of Siegmund's death, for instance, suggests that throughout their married life he took it for granted that her interests were

confined to the narrow world of the family life. In reality, however, she 'had had all her life a fancy for a more open, public form of living than that of a domestic circle' (Tr 218). Although music was apparently what brought them initially together, after they get married Beatrice was never encouraged to play again. Whilst he complains that she fails to grow with him, Siegmund seems to have been hardly interested in Beatrice's artistic and intellectual interests and potential. 'I have not touched the piano for - for years' (Tr 222), she admits after Siegmund's death.

Lawrence also seems to suggest that Siegmund fails to do justice to Beatrice as mother and housewife. He never thought highly of her in these two roles. Returning home from the holiday Siegmund considers the possibility of living on his own, and of sending the family to a cottage in the country:

'But then, what then? Beatrice and the children in the country: and me not looking after the children. Beatrice is thriftless. She would be in endless difficulty. It would be a degradation to me. She would keep a red sore inflamed against me: I should be a shameful thing in her mouth. Besides, there would go all her strength. She would not make any efforts. 'Has he brought it on us,' she would say. 'Let him see what the result is.' And things would go from bad to worse with them. It would be a gangrene of shame - -.['] (Tr 162)

The Beatrice Lawrence depicts after Siegmund's death, however, tells a different story. '[U]nbroken by tragedy' (Tr 220), she proves in no time that not only she is a careful mother whose aim is to make it possible for the children to enjoy 'their careless youth' (Tr 220), but also a successful businesswoman. Within a year from her husband's demise she determines to carry out 'the scheme of her heart': to take in boarders.

Above all, Lawrence seems to imply that Siegmund has failed to see in his wife his own potential rescuer. In the penultimate chapter of the book Lawrence stresses that Beatrice saves the life of the pessimistic boarder Allport. When Beatrice says she is surprised he is not out like everybody else, Allport responds dejectedly:

'No - o! What's the use....of going out? There's nowhere to go -.'

'Oh, come! There's the Hearth, and the City - and you must join a tennis club. Now I know just the thing - the club to which Vera belongs - -.'

'Ah yes! You go down to the City - but there is nothing there - What I mean to say - You want a pal - and even then - well' - he drawled the word - 'we-ll, it's merely escaping from yourself - killing time.'

'Oh don't say that!' exclaimed Beatrice. 'You want to enjoy life.'

'Just so! - Ah just so!' exclaimed Mr Allport, 'But all the same - it's like this - you only get up to the same thing tomorrow. What I mean to say - what's the good, after all? - it's merely living because you've got to.'

'You are too pessimistic altogether for a young man. I look at it differently myself; yet I'll be bound I have more cause for grumbling. What's the trouble, now?'

'We-ell - you can't lay your finger on a thing like that! What I mean to say - it's nothing very definite. But after all - what is there to do but to hop out of life as quick as possible? - that's the best way.' (Tr 219)

It could be argued that Lawrence included this passage to show how shallow a woman Beatrice is. Her notion of enjoying time by walking in the Heath, going down to the City, and joining a tennis club can be of use to a character like Allport, but not to Siegmund the artist. Throughout The Trespasser Lawrence highlights the artist's need for actual and ideal understanding; something which Beatrice is incapable of offering him.

Although the new Beatrice is an interesting figure who demands special attention, her transformation is too radical to seem convincing. This character's metamorphosis takes place so quickly - everything happens within the span of one single chapter - that one cannot help thinking that Lawrence is expecting us to believe too much about her 'latent' potential. Eager to add some optimistic touches to the novel in the wake of the artist's suicide, Lawrence seems to have been somehow unaware of the artificial Beatrice he was creating.

11.3 Siegmund and Byrne: Affinities and Differences

Like Beatrice, Helena changes considerably in the concluding part of The Trespasser. With Helena, however, Lawrence follows a much more careful line. Her transformation is not as radical as Beatrice, and so she emerges in the end as a more convincing figure. In Chapter XXXI we do not see a different Helena, but a Helena who is well on the way to become a more realistic person. While she will not negate completely her former self, Helena will accept as something normal what she has been

rejecting for so long. She will attain wholeness when the spiritual and the physical in her are no longer in conflict

Helena's transformation differs from that of Beatrice in two other aspects. Firstly, unlike Beatrice, Helena is not so ready to condemn Siegmund's suicide as an act of cowardice; in fact she hardly finds fault with him after he dies. Secondly, Helena's transformation starts through the agency of another character. Helena does not change by herself, as is the case with Beatrice. Helena needs someone's help, sympathy, and criticism to understand what went wrong in her friendship with Siegmund. Cecil Byrne becomes Helena's 'merciless' friend (Tr 46) and mentor. He opens her eyes to her failures and deficiencies as well as to her potential. His presence adds to the credibility of Helena's transformation.

In spite of his importance, even Cecil sounds something of a device of the Hampson type. Both Hampson and Cecil claim to know and understand people whom they have never seen or met: Hampson is familiar with the tricks and caprices of Helena much in the same way as Cecil is with the weaknesses and frustrations of Siegmund. Lawrence introduces both Hampson and Cecil to enhance Siegmund's and Helena's self-awareness as well as their understanding of each other.

Although Cecil and Hampson have a common function, there is a great deal they do not share. Unlike Hampson, Cecil has no prejudices against women. Nor does he cast a gloomy spell over Helena's future. He shows her the way to life not to death: 'You are not dead. Even if you want to be, you're not. Even if it's a bitter thing to say, you have to say it: you are not dead...' (Tr 45).

Lawrence introduced Cecil to highlight further where an artist like Siegmund went wrong. Cecil emerges as a figure who understands women and can express himself in a way that Siegmund never could. Cecil's ability to communicate suggests that his self-awareness is more developed than that of Cyril Beardsall and Siegmund. Cecil is the first Lawrentian artistic *alter ego* who can express himself, and has every chance of success to establish contacts with women. Cecil does not consider women as a threat he has to avoid as is the case with Cyril. Nor does he view them as delicate creatures

whom he must be careful not to insult or hurt, as Siegmund considers Helena. Like Siegmund, Cecil treats Helena very gently: 'He was exceedingly delicate in his handling of her' (Tr 226). Unlike Siegmund, though, Cecil does not hesitate to tell her whenever he disagrees with her. Although Cecil and Helena are together in two chapters, he argues with her much more than Siegmund does throughout the twenty-five chapters in which he is constantly in contact with her.

In the opening chapter Cecil opposes Helena's 'aesthetic withdrawal' and 'passive existence' in a rather more straightforward way than he does by the end of the book. It has been suggested that much of Cecil's objections to the attitude Helena adopts after the tragedy comes from his jealousy for Siegmund. There is enough evidence in the book, however, also suggesting that Cecil does not see himself as a rival of a dead lover. On the contrary, Cecil is annoyed and 'hated' Helena at times because 'He always felt a deep sympathy and kin-ship with Siegmund' (Tr 227). Cecil's intention is not to make Helena forget the dead violinist, but to help her realise what Siegmund had wanted from her. The first thing Cecil wants Helena to consider is that she has been wrong to interpret Siegmund's interest in her as mainly sexual. This is probably the reason why in the first chapter Cecil is hardly depicted as a lover in the conventional sense of the word:

Byrne, spent for the time being, was busy hunting for some life-interest to give her. He ignored the simplest, that of love, because he was even more faithful than she to the memory of Siegmund, and blinder than most, to his own heart.
(Tr 46)

The sympathy and veneration Cecil displays for the dead artist has been the reason why some commentators see him as a new Siegmund. As a result of such equation, it is often taken for granted that Cecil will fail with Helena much in the same way as his predecessor. Michael Black, for instance, postulates that 'the implications of the ending are purely negative: she [Helena] cannot give to Byrne what she could not give to Siegmund, and Byrne, we suppose, will have to learn this.'⁸⁰ The same view is held also by John Worthen:

The final chapter, paralleling the first, shows Helena with her new partner, Cecil Byrne: but there is no sign that this particular C.B. knows, any better than Cyril Beardsall or Siegmund, what is happening to him. Helena has not changed, and Byrne clearly needs to read The Trespasser if he is to escape the fate of his predecessor.⁸¹

Apparently Cecil is very cautious with Helena, but this makes him hardly a failure as a lover. On the contrary, the cautious policy he employs with her suggests that, within a short time, he comes to know Helena better than Siegmund did in several years. Cecil is aware of the sexual-spiritual dichotomy in Helena, but is wise enough not to demand or expect a radical change in her too soon. In a sense Helena is a patient whom he the therapist has to treat carefully to guarantee a successful outcome.

Occasionally, however, this careful and prudent Cecil does not hesitate to be harsh with Helena. He is often 'whimsical', 'wistful', and 'ironic' with her in a way that Siegmund would have never allowed himself:

'You are cold,' he said.
 'Only my hands - and they usually are,' she replied gently.
 'And mine are generally warm.'
 'I know that,' she said. 'It's almost the only warmth I get now - your hands. They really are wonderfully warm and close-touching.'
 'As good as a baked potato,' he said.
 She pressed his hands, scolding him for his mockery.
 'So many calories per week - isn't that how we manage it?' he asked. 'On credit.'
 She put her other hand on his, as if beseeching him to forego his irony, which hurt her. (Tr 228)

Although she is hurt by his frequent ironic remarks, Helena displays no animosity towards Cecil. On the contrary, whenever he mocks her, she either smiles or laughs. The two verbs - smile, laugh - are used more than any other verb to describe how Helena reacts to Cecil's mockery in the last chapter of the book: they appear at least three and thirteen times respectively. The narrative contains the earliest sign that, although slowly, Helena is definitely changing:

He put his arm round her, drawing her nearer his warmth. After this new and daring move, neither spoke for a while.
 'The rain continues,' he said.
 'And will do,' she added, laughing.
 'Quite content!' he said.

The bird overhead chirruped loudly again.

"Strew on us roses, roses", 'quoted Byrne, adding after a while, in wistful mockery: "And never a sprig of yew" - eh?"

Helena made a small sound of tenderness and comfort for him, and weariness for herself. She let herself sink a little closer against him.

'Shall it not be so - no yew?' he murmured. (Tr 229)

The 'yew' does not symbolise only the memory of the dead Siegmund. Cecil's figurative language implies not only that he urges Helena to come out of the 'hedge' she had planted around her 'spiritual' self, but also that he would assist her to do so. Cecil is confident that he will 'make marks on you' (Tr 229), that will not come off. The 'weariness' and 'helplessness' she displays in the closing lines of the epilogue chapter indicate that sooner or later she will 'surrender'. Sinking her head on Cecil's chest, Helena says she wants 'rest and warmth' (Tr 230). Her last words are spoken in 'dull tones' (Tr 231). Yet they are important because they signal that finally the inarticulate Helena is starting to express herself. Contrary to Siegmund's prediction that after his death Helena will always be 'like a foreigner who cannot learn the strange language' (Tr 155), by the end of the book she has already started to show the first signs that she is becoming 'communicable'. The question with her is not if she will ever be able to articulate herself but when.

The communication Cecil and Helena begin to establish by the end of The Trespasser is probably the most important indicator of Lawrence's artistic growth since the completion of The White Peacock. Unlike Cyril Beardsall and Siegmund, Cecil is not a secluded Lawrentian *alter ego*. He is able to articulate himself as well as to encourage Helena to 'render herself to the intelligence' (Tr 143). The important thing about their as yet fledgling relationship is not whether they might accept each other as normal lovers, but that by talking, by expressing themselves they would be able to understand better who they are, and what they expect from one another.

The Cecil-Helena relationship marks a turning-point in Lawrence's treatment of the artist-woman relationship. In The Trespasser, however, Lawrence's new orientation in the handling of the theme is still at an embryonic stage. In spite of his ability to be more articulate than Cyril Beardsall and Siegmund, Cecil Byrne remains largely an

episodic figure; he appears only in the prologue and the epilogue chapters. This is one of the reasons why much about this character - particularly the courage and wisdom he displays with woman - remains a mystery.

Only in Sons and Lovers Lawrence could finally offer a comprehensive portrait of an artist. Paul Morel is the first Lawrentian artistic figure whose growth is traced at every stage in his life. The wealth of information about his contacts with people, particularly with women, are crucial to tracing his coming to consciousness, and the growing ability to express himself. The artist in Lawrence's *oeuvre* becomes conscious of his potential and communicable through Paul Morel.

NOTES: CHAPTER FOUR

1. For Siegmund's intentions to emigrate see The Trespasser, by D. L. Lawrence, ed. Elizabeth Mansfield (Cambridge, 1981), pp. 163, 181. (Hereafter cited as Tr).
2. See WP, p. 319. In the chapter 'A Prospect among the Marshes of Lethe' Emily made Cyril 'tell her all my doings, and she marvelled'.
3. I am indebted to Elizabeth Mansfield for drawing my attention to the common initials in the names of Cyril Beardsall and Cecil Byrne (see Elizabeth Mansfield, ed., Explanatory Notes, The Trespasser, by D. H. Lawrence (Cambridge, 1981), pp. 233-43 (p. 233 n.42:28). (Hereafter cited as Mansfield's Notes on Tr).
4. John Worthen has argued recently that Siegmund is the tragic version of Leslie Tempest (see Early Years, p. 260).
5. For this information I am indebted to Andrew Robertson (see Andrew Robertson, ed., Introduction, The White Peacock, by D. H. Lawrence (Cambridge, 1983), pp. xvii-xlix (p. xxix). (Hereafter cited as Robertson's Introduction to WP); and Robertson's Notes on WP, p. 389 n.255:16).
6. See Early Years, p. 256.
7. For Lawrence's referring to Cyril as 'myself' see in Letters, i, his letters to Blanche Jennings, 17 July 1908, pp. 61-4 (p. 61); 1 November 1909, pp. 140-2 (p. 141).
8. For Lawrence's passionate outbursts against the Cyril figure see in Letters, i, his letters to Blanche Jennings, 17 July 1908, pp. 61-4 (p. 61); 30 July [-3 August] 1908, pp. 65-9 (p. 69).
9. For Lawrence's uneasiness about his own prose in The White Peacock and The Trespasser see in Letters, i, his letters to Blanche Jennings, 15 June 1908, pp. 54-6 (p. 55); to Frederick Atkinson, 24 June 1910, pp. 166-7 (p. 167); and to Edward Garnett, 17 December 1911, p. 337.
10. See John Worthen, Early Years, pp. 261-2. Worthen quotes 'a naked fool' from Lawrence's letter to Frederick Atkinson, 24 June 1910, in Letters, i, pp. 166-7 (p. 167).
11. John Stoll, Search for Integration, p. 44. To Stoll, Lawrence's disapproval of The Trespasser springs from the fact that the author 'confronts the incest theme more directly here than in The White Peacock, and he adopts an explicit viewpoint toward it'.
12. For Lawrence's uneasiness as a result of what he confessed about himself in The White Peacock and The Trespasser see in Letters, i, his letters to Blanche Jennings, 15 June 1908, pp. 54-6 (pp. 55-6); to Frederick Atkinson, 24 June 1910, pp. 166-7 (p. 167); and to Edward Garnett, 17 December 1911, p. 337,

and 21 January 1912, pp. 353-4 (p. 353).

13. For comments on The Trespasser as an erotic work see the reviews of it in Athenaeum 1 June 1912:613-9; Daily News and Leader 21 June 1912:8; Outlook 29 June 1912:950; Nottinghamshire Guardian Literary Supplement 2 July 1912; Eye-Witness 12 July 1912:123; Nation 19 October 1912:152-4.
14. To Stephen Miko, 'Helena's failure to meet Siegmund's desire causes a major collapse in his quest for meaning....her sexual failure is the immediate cause for his downfall' (see Lawrentian Aesthetic, p. 43).
15. Critics do not fully agree as to which of Helen Corke's autobiographical writings Lawrence consulted to write The Trespasser. My belief is that he had access to the following: 'The Freshwater Diary', 'To Siegmund's Violin', 'Aftermath', 'The Cornwall Writing', and 'The Letter'. Even if Lawrence did not read all these writings, The Trespasser as well as his correspondence indicate that Corke told him more or less everything she recorded about her tragic love-affair not only up to 1912, but also most of what she would write about it thereafter.
16. For Helen Corke's references to her lesbian nature see in The Trespasser, by D. H. Lawrence, ed. Elizabeth Mansfield (Cambridge, 1981), her following memoir pieces: 'The Letter': The Diary of Helen Corke, pp. 281-92 (p. 292). (Hereafter cited as 'The Letter'); 'The Cornwall Writing', pp. 302-18 (pp. 313, 317).
17. See Helen Corke, Neutral Ground (London: Barker, 1933; repr. Bath: Chivers, 1966), pp. 10-1, 21, 52-5, 66-8, 95, 97, 163-4, 303.
18. Ibid., p. 121.
19. Ibid., p. 132.
20. Ibid., p. 123.
21. Ibid., p. 285.
22. See John Stoll, Search for Integration, pp. 50, 51.
23. After they were introduced to each other by Lawrence, Helen Corke and Jessie Chambers developed a lesbian relation which lasted for several years. For Ellis/Corke's lesbian relationship with Theresa/Jessie see Neutral Ground, pp. 283, 291, 297, 299, 302, 303, 304, 306, 307, 308. Corke tackles her lesbian interest in Jessie also in her 'Portrait of D. H. Lawrence, 1901-10', in The Texas Quarterly V Spring 1962:168-77. (Hereafter cited as 'Portraits of Lawrence'); repr. D. H. Lawrence: the Croydon Years, by Helen Corke (Austin: U of Texas P, 1965), pp. 1-16 (pp. 12-4). (Hereafter cited as Croydon Years).
24. Search for Integration, p. 42.

25. Helen Corke, 'The Letter', p. 282.
26. Ibid., pp. 289-90.
27. See Helen Corke, 'The Freshwater Diary', in In Our Infancy: an Autobiography. Part I: 1882-1912, by Helen Corke (Cambridge, 1975), pp. 222-35; repr. in The Trespasser, by D. H. Lawrence, ed. Elizabeth Mansfield (Cambridge, 1981), pp. 293-301 (p. 294). (Hereafter cited as 'Freshwater Diary').
28. Helen Corke, 'To Siegmund's Violin', in D. H. Lawrence Review 24:1 Spring 1992:17-21 (p. 20). (Hereafter cited as 'Siegmund's Violin'). Corke records moments from her intimate relationship with Herbert Macartney in 'The Freshwater Diary', pp. 294, 296, 299, 300; and in 'The Cornwall Writing', p. 314.
29. See Helen Corke, 'The Letter', p. 282.
30. See Helen Corke, 'Cornwall Writing', p. 318.
31. Ibid., p. 317.
32. 'The Letter', p. 281.
33. John Worthen, Early Years, p. 259.
34. D. H. Lawrence, 'The Saga of Siegmund', ms., Bancroft Library, U of California, Berkeley, leaf 77.
35. For more on Siegmund's craving for and Helena's repulsion from sex see 'The Saga of Siegmund', leaves 64-7, 101, 107, 112. I am indebted to A. R. Atkins for drawing my attention to these passages in 'The Saga of Siegmund' (see A. R. Atkins, 'Textual Influences on D. H. Lawrence's "The Saga of Siegmund"', in D. H. Lawrence Review 24:1 Spring 1992:7-17 (pp. 10-1). (Hereafter cited as 'Textual Influences').
36. For Hueffer's opinion about 'The Saga' as an erotic work see in Letters, i, Lawrence's letters to Louie Burrows, 9 September 1910, p. 178; and to Edward Garnett, 4 December 1911, p. 330, and 18 December 1911, pp. 339-40 (p. 339). Hueffer never changed his opinion that 'The Saga' was 'erotic, and as late as 1938 reiterated: 'It was a Trespasser [sic] much - oh, but much! - more phallic than is the book as it stands and much more moral in the inverted-puritanic sense' (see Nehls, i, pp. 106-21 (p. 121)).
37. Michael Black, D. H. Lawrence: The Early Fiction: A Commentary (London: Macmillan, 1986), p. 83. (Hereafter cited as Early Fiction).
38. Nehls, i, p. 121.
39. John Worthen, Early Years, p. 260.

40. Unlike Hueffer, Heinemann did not condemn 'The Saga' outright as 'erotic'. Yet like Hueffer, Heinemann too seems to have disapproved of the novel mainly because of its 'eroticism'. The fact that it took Heinemann a long time to express his opinion about the work and to return the manuscript to Lawrence - 'The Saga' remained with Heinemann from October 1910 to December 1911 in spite of Lawrence's insistence to have it back - indicates, firstly, that the publisher was uneasy about the work's outspoken 'sexuality', and secondly, that he was hesitant to reject it completely. (For Heinemann's unwillingness to make himself clear what he thought about 'The Saga', and for Lawrence's frequent request to him to return the manuscript see in Letters, i, Lawrence's letters to Sydney Pawling, 14 November 1910, pp. 186-7; to Violet Hunt, 13 December 1910, pp. 199-200 (p. 200); to Frederick Atkinson, 11 February 1911, pp. 229-30, and 15 March 1911, pp. 240-1 (p. 240); to Louie Burrows, 3 March 1911, pp. 234-5 (p. 235); to Ada Lawrence, 8 March 1911, pp. 236-7 (p. 236); to Helen Corke, [14 March 1911], pp. 238-40 (p. 239); to Edward Garnett, 4 December 1911, p. 330, and 18 December 1911, pp. 339-40 (p. 339).
41. For Lawrence's decision and determination not to publish 'The Saga' see in Letters, i, his letters to Sydney Pawling, 18 October 1910, pp. 184-5 (p. 184); to Frederick Atkinson, 11 February 1911, pp. 229-30; to Ada Lawrence, 17 February 1911, pp. 230-1 (p. 231), and 8 March 1911, pp. 236-7 (p. 236); to Frederick Atkinson, 15 March 1911, pp. 240-1 (p. 240); to Martin Secker, 12 June 1911, pp. 275-6 (p. 276); and to Edward Garnett, 18 December 1911, pp. 339-40 (p. 339)).
42. For Lawrence's referring to 'The Saga of Siegmund' as 'pornographic', 'erotic', 'love-novel' see in Letters, i, his letters to Frederick Atkinson, 11 February 1911, pp. 229-30 (p. 229); to Martin Secker, 12 June 1911, pp. 275-6 (p. 276); to Edward Garnett, 20 October 1911, p. 317, 4 December 1911, p. 330, and 18 December 1911, pp. 339-40 (p. 339); and to Arthur McLeod, 24 January 1912, pp. 355-7 (p. 356).
43. Letter to Edward Garnett, 18 December 1911, in Letters, i, pp. 339-40 (p. 339).
44. Lawrence doubted that Hueffer and the Heinemann readers paid due attention to 'The Saga'. On 12 October 1910 Lawrence told Grace Crawford that he was uneasy because 'the second book is wandering vaguely in the irresponsible hands of Mr Hueffer' (see Letters, i, pp. 182-3 (p. 183)). Whereas on 19 January 1912 Lawrence wrote to Edward Garnett: 'I really don't think the Saga was ever read at Wm Heinemann's - not by anyone' (see Letters, i, pp. 351-2 (p. 351)).
45. Letter to Edward Garnett, 18 December 1911, in Letters, i, pp. 339-40 (p. 339).
46. See John Stoll, Search for Integration, p. 42.
47. See John Worthen, Early Years, p. 332.
48. See Elizabeth Mansfield, ed., Introduction, The Trespasser, by D. H. Lawrence (Cambridge, 1981), pp. 3-37 (p. 35). (Hereafter cited as Mansfield's Introduction

to Tr).

49. See Stephen Miko, Lawrentian Aesthetic, p. 43.
50. See the rev. of The Trespasser, by D. H. Lawrence, in Nottingham Guardian Literary Supplement 2 July 1912.
51. See John Worthen, Early Years, p. 336.
52. For interpretations of Helena's inability to respond to the physical love of her lover because she is a representative of modern women see Michael C. Sharpe, 'The Genesis of D. H. Lawrence's The Trespasser', in Essays in Criticism 11 (1961):34-9 (p. 37). (Hereafter cited as 'Genesis of Tr'); and John Stoll, Search for Integration, p. 43.
53. Colin Milton, Lawrence and Nietzsche, pp. 212, 226.
54. For treatment of Helena's 'abnormal' sexual behaviour as a reflection of her religious upbringing and beliefs see Michael Black, Early Fiction, p. 110; Alastair Niven, D. H. Lawrence: The Novels, pp. 30-1; and John Stoll, Search for Integration, pp. 45-6.
55. See Alastair Niven, D. H. Lawrence: The Novels, p. 31.
56. See Michael Black, Early Fiction, p. 110.
57. See Colin Milton, Lawrence and Nietzsche, pp. 209, 224.
58. Lawrentian Aesthetic, pp. 38-9 n.2.
59. For Helena's treatment as a lesbian see particularly John Stoll, Search for Integration, pp. 50-1; and Alastair Niven, D. H. Lawrence: The Novels, pp. 29-30.
60. For more examples of Helena's restlessness because of her inability to comprehend Siegmund in his restored moments see Tr, pp. 69:17-25, 69:37-8, 70:1-3, 75:11-6.
61. Although Helena's tendency to possess and domineer over Siegmund has been widely tackled by many critics, her conflict with him has hardly been seen as that between a possessive woman and an artist (see John Stoll, Search for Integration, pp. 45-6; Alastair Niven, D. H. Lawrence: The Novels, pp. 30-1; John Worthen Early Years, p. 211; and A. R. Atkins, 'Textual Influences', pp. 12-3.
62. For a comprehensive picture of the Pre-Raphaelite image of women see John Dixon Hunt, The Pre-Raphaelite Imagination: 1848-1900 (London: Routledge, 1968), pp. 177-210.
63. For more examples of Helena's tendency to possess Siegmund physically see Tr,

pp. 86, 103.

64. See Tr, p. 69:10-6.

65. For interpretations of Siegmund's death with reasons closely linked with his overt sexuality see Stephen Miko, Lawrentian Aesthetic, p. 43; Michael Black, Early Fiction, p. 79; Colin Milton, Lawrence and Nietzsche, p. 212; John Worthen, Early Years, p. 336; and A. R. Atkins, 'Textual Influences', p. 10.

66. Michael Black, Early Fiction, p. 83.

67. A. R. Atkins, 'Textual Influences', p. 14.

68. Michael Bell, Language and Being, p. 31.

69. Ibid.

70. For more on Siegmund's desire to expose himself to sunlight see Tr, pp. 79, 118.

71. Siegmund was seventeen and Beatrice eighteen when they got married (see Tr, p.123).

72. Stephen Miko, Lawrentian Aesthetic, p. 46.

73. D. H. Lawrence: The Novels, p. 29. I have replaced the page number of the quotation from the Penguin edition of The Trespasser used by Niven with the corresponding page number of the Cambridge edition.

74. For Helena's failure to understand Siegmund see Tr, pp. 100, 152.

75. Ibid., p. 101.

76. Ibid., p. 107.

77. Letter to Grace Crawford, 9 July 1910, in Letters, i, pp. 168-9.

78. For Helen Corke's annoyance at Lawrence's handling of her love-affair with Herbert Macartney in The Trespasser see in Letters, i, Lawrence's letters to her, [11 May 1910], pp. 159-60 (p. 159); [14 March 1911], pp. 238-40; 1 February 1912, pp. 359-60; 28 May 1912, p. 411. In Letters, i, see also Lawrence's letters to Edward Garnett, 8 March 1912, pp. 372-3 (p. 373), and 29 June 1912, pp. 419-20 (p. 419). Corke expresses her frustration regarding Lawrence's treatment of her own story in the novel in 'Portrait of Lawrence', p. 15. For more on Corke's disappointment with Lawrence's handling of her personal experience in The Trespasser see John Worthen, Early Years, p. 260, and A. R. Atkins, 'Textual Influences', pp. 15-6 n.4.

79. Stephen Miko, Lawrentian Aesthetic, p. 52.

80. Michael Black, Early Fiction, p. 83.

81. John Worthen, Early Years, p. 334.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE ARTIST'S QUEST FOR SELF-FULFILMENT AND FREEDOM IN
SONS AND LOVERS1. LAWRENCE'S INTEREST IN THE ARTIST'S CHILDHOOD: INFLUENCES
FROM DICKENS AND PARALLELISM WITH JOYCE

Lawrence's first major artists - Cyril Beardsall and Siegmund MacNair - are adults. In the opening chapters of The White Peacock Cyril is a 'young man' of nineteen. Part I of the novel ends when he is twenty-three. Part II is devoted exclusively to the twenty-third year of his life. The concluding Part III covers fifteen years of Cyril's exile. Except for some sketchy remarks, nothing important is mentioned about this artist's early years. As for Siegmund's early life - except for a single passing remark about his being sick as a child, and the reference to his hasty marriage at seventeen - it too remains an enigmatic stage.

The artist's early life claims Lawrence's attention only in the third novel. Sons and Lovers marks the emergence of childhood as a crucial stage in the Lawrentian artist's life. Paul Morel's childhood, however, represents not only the first but also the last instance of Lawrence's interest in an artist's early years. Never again would Lawrence devote so much attention to any other artist's childhood in spite of the fact that the artist remained one of the characters he would write most frequently about to the end of his life.

By the time Lawrence began 'Paul Morel' I in 1910 the child was already an established literary character in English literature. In his youth Lawrence had read many memorable books about childhood, but the writer who seems to have impressed him most was Charles Dickens.¹ One thinks of the Dickensian child as a character displaying on one hand the 'innocence' and 'experience' of the Romantic child of Blake and Wordsworth, and on the other hand, the alienation and introversion of the twentieth-century literary children. Dickens paid unprecedented attention to the psychology of the child. Paul Dombey's loneliness and moody dispositions make him

perhaps the nearest nineteenth-century precursor of Paul Morel. When we read that the five-year-old Paul Dombey:

had a strange, old-fashioned, thoughtful way...of sitting brooding in his miniature armchair, when he looked (and talked) like one of those terrible little beings in the fairy tales....He would frequently be stricken with this precocious mood....and would sometimes lapse into it suddenly.²

it seems as if some fifty years later Gertrude 'plumped' Paul Morel 'of three or four' into the same little chair whenever he had 'fits of depression' (SL 64). But Paul Dombey shares more than solitariness, precocious moods, or even poor health with Paul Morel. What makes the Dickensian 'elfin' child an artistic forerunner of the Lawrentian Paul is the imaginative power he displays so frequently:

He was intimate with all the paperhanging in the house; saw things *no-one* else saw in the patterns; found miniature tigers and lions running up the bedroom walls, and squinting faces leering....The solitary child lived on, surrounded by this strange arabesque work of his musing fancy, and no one understood him.³

One wonders when Lawrence could have read the above passage - Dombey and Son was one of his 'great favourites'⁴ - when he wrote the chapter 'The young Life of Paul' in Sons and Lovers:

He loved the evenings, after eight o'clock, when the light was put out, and he could watch the fire flames spring over the darkness of the walls and ceiling; could watch huge shadows waving and tossing, till the room seemed full of men who battled silently. (SL 91)

Considering that Paul Dombey is sacrificed for the sake of his father's punishment and redemption, it is difficult to say if Dickens meant this child figure's ability to 'see things' as an early indication of his artistic potential. In Sons and Lovers, though, Paul Morel's early signs of imaginative power are indicative of this literary child's artistic nature.

It is a striking coincidence that when Lawrence was writing about the early life of Paul Morel the would-be artist, another equally ambitious and talented young writer was engaged in a work of a similar theme. In 1904 James Joyce wrote the autobiographical story-essay 'A Portrait of the Artist', which in ten years' time would evolve first into Stephen Hero, and finally into A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.

It is worth noting, however, that, unlike Lawrence, Joyce was more concerned with the young artist's attitude towards his country, politics and religion.

Lawrence began to write Sons and Lovers when, to quote Peter Coveney, the fin-de-siècle novel about childhood was still essentially escapist in spirit. In his words, some novelists of this period wrote about 'happy childhood' because for them 'the adjustment was unattainable',⁵ and as such they insisted on the nostalgia of the cult of the child.

Sons and Lovers, however, is hardly as Coveney puts it 'in the exact sense, nostalgic'.⁶ Neither Paul Morel's early life nor any of Lawrence's purely autobiographical writings about his own early years shows that the character and his creator were always happy children. On the contrary, both of them went at times through a troubled childhood. Paul Morel never says 'I want always to be a little boy and to have fun',⁷ as Peter Pan does in James Barrie's Peter Pan. Nor does Paul Morel share Paul Dombey's wistful wish to remain a child.⁸ In Sons and Lovers certain moments in Paul's childhood are highlighted to reveal the formative role early tensions play in the life of this future artist. Paul's tensions are essentially personal and familial in origin. His childhood is affected considerably by the parental conflict. Yet most of this artist's early troubles come from his close attachment for his mother.

2. THE UNWANTED CHILD AND THE EARLY PROGNOSTICATION OF THE WOULD-BE MOTHER-ARTIST BOND

The artist-mother relation is one of the major themes in Sons and Lovers. Only in this novel does Lawrence offer a comprehensive picture of the artist's relationship with his mother. The Paul-Gertrude relation has no match among the former and subsequent artist-mother relationships in Lawrence's *oeuvre*.

Considering the pivotal place the filial-maternal relation claims in Sons and Lovers, it is not surprising that this has been one of the most thoroughly investigated aspects of the novel. The publication of the fourth and the last version of the book in 1992,

however, makes available for the first time new evidence about several aspects of Paul's life, and particularly about the nature of his relationship with his mother, and her initial attitude towards him. The analysis of and conclusions about the Paul-Gertrude relation in this thesis are based entirely on the study of the new information provided by the Cambridge edition.

For the last eighty years the general belief has been that Paul and Gertrude are linked in a bond which is terminated only with the mother's death. No matter how close Paul and Gertrude are, though, their relation is not always a consistent mutual attachment; not at the very beginning at least. The first thing recorded about the pregnant mother and the unborn Paul is that 'she felt wretched with the coming child....She could not afford to have this third. She did not want it....This coming child was too much for her' (SL 13).

That Paul is an unwanted child has not passed unnoticed by critics. Yet the issue has never been treated with the attention it deserves. Gertrude's reluctance to have Paul has been ignored by commentators probably because they make too much of the immediate 'change' apparent in her attitude towards the baby prior to and particularly after its birth. Sometimes she sounds deeply repentant and thus eager to make amends for not having wanted baby Paul in the first place:

she had not wanted this child to come, and there it lay in her arms and pulled at her heart. She felt as if the navel string that had connected its frail little body with hers had not been broken. A wave of hot love went over her to the infant. She held it close to her face and breast. With all her force, with all her soul she would make up to it for having brought it into the world unloved. She would love it all the more now it was here, carry it in her love. (SL 51)

It has been observed that the mother-son bond apparent in this passage is prenatal in origin; that it is initially forged in the scene in which the locked-out pregnant mother walks 'trembling in every limb, while the child boiled within her' (SL 33):

Mrs Morel leaned on the garden gate, looking out, and she lost herself awhile. She did not know what she thought. Except for a slight feeling of sickness, and her consciousness in the child, her self melted out like scent into the shiny, pale air. After a time, the child too melted with her in the mixing-pot

of moonlight, and she rested with the hills and the lilies and houses, all swum together in a kind of swoon. (SL 34)

Carol Sklenicka argues that the scene reveals how the mother makes an impact on Paul's 'fetal consciousness',⁹ thus 'symbolically' establishing a bond with him before his birth.¹⁰ The reciprocal attachment here, the critic furthers her argument, serves a dual purpose: 'it gives the mother a motive for accepting the inevitable, and it comforts Paul/Lawrence, who would otherwise have to feel guilty for his very existence.'¹¹

The early mother-son bond displays a tendency of wishful thinking on the part of Lawrence who had been himself an unwanted baby,¹² and had suffered considerably in his early life because of this.¹³ Nevertheless, this does not necessarily mean that Lawrence contrived the mother-baby bond in Sons and Lovers so that he and his literary kindred spirit would not feel guilty for their 'very existence'.

The garden scene indicates how mature and sophisticated a writer Lawrence becomes in his third novel. The implication and importance of this symbolic scene become more evident if it is not seen in isolation but in close relation with other symbolic incidents. In Sons and Lovers every scene is part of a long chain of symbolic moments whose function is not to tell what goes on here and now rather than to foresee what will happen in the near or distant future. Unlike Dickens who relies heavily on coincidences such as those seen in Great Expectations, Lawrence is meticulous to show that in Sons and Lovers nothing takes place out of the blue. This strong cause-effect relation is not told but implied. The telling gives place to inferring in Lawrence's third book.

The garden scene is the earliest of many other related incidents steeped in religious symbolism pointing to the direction in which the artist-mother relation will develop in the future. While raving in silence against her husband, Mrs Morel becomes aware of 'something' about her:

With an effort, she roused herself, to see what it was that penetrated her consciousness. The tall white lilies were reeling in the moonlight, and the air was charged with their perfume, as with a presence. Mrs Morel gasped slightly in fear. She touched the big, pallid flowers on their petals, then shivered. They seemed to be stretching in the moonlight. She put her hand into one white bin:

the gold scarcely showed on her fingers by moonlight. She bent down, to look at the bin-ful of yellow pollen: but it only appeared dusky. Then she drank a deep draught of the scent. It almost made her dizzy. (SL 34)

It has been observed that the scene recalls the Annunciation to the Virgin Mary as seen in several Renaissance paintings in which the angel Gabriel carries a lily as he brings the news of the Incarnation to Mary.¹⁴ Those who notice the obvious parallel, however, take it for granted that the mother-son bond is finally established, thus ignoring another equally significant aspect of the Annunciation: not everyone was able to understand or willing to believe in the Incarnation. Prior to the lily scene Mrs Morel hopes that her children would realise for her what she could not achieve herself, but she hardly views her unborn child as being one of them. Nor would she see a 'saviour' in baby Paul after its birth. On the contrary, the implication of her attitude towards Paul on several occasions is that she would somehow 'victimise' this 'lamb' son (SL 50). Watching a few shocks of corn in a corner of the fallow that stand up as if alive, Mrs Morel 'imagined them bowing: perhaps her son would be a Joseph' (SL 50). Like Joseph who became the saviour of the brothers who sold him to the traders, Gertrude makes a Joseph out of Paul: in the end she will turn to him to realise what she fails to achieve through other children.

That child Paul is a 'victim-saviour' (as Joseph was), a potential bearer of good news, is implied also in the baptising scene which is more pagan than Christian:

She thrust the infant forward to the crimson, throbbing sun, almost with relief. She saw him lift his little fist. Then she put him to her bosom again, ashamed almost of her impulse to give him back again whence he came.

'If he lives,' she thought to herself, 'what will become of him - what will he be?'

Her heart was anxious.

'I will call him "Paul",' she said, suddenly, she knew not why. (SL 51)

But Lawrence knows why. The sun behind the child's head becomes the natural halo of this Apostle's namesake, who will later preach a 'gospel' of hope to his mother. Mrs Morel may call her baby 'Paul', but she is not sure whether he will live or not, and even if he will, she can think of nothing optimistic as to what he will be.

The cluster of these beatific images on this so-called special mother-baby attachment comes to a climax in the scene following Paul's 'baptism': intoxicated more with anger as a result of his wife's abusive remarks rather than with alcohol, Mr Morel flings a drawer at her. One of the corners catches Mrs Morel's eyebrow that starts bleeding profusely. Drops of blood fall from her wound into Paul's 'fragile, glistening hair' and soak through his scalp. Critics view this incident as a sequel of the scene in which the pregnant mother is locked out in the garden. Mrs Morel's blood is taken for granted to mark the ratification of the mother-son bond hinted at similar symbolic scenes recorded earlier in the book. This is not to suggest that the blood in the drawer scene is not related to the *bond*, because this is indisputably the main issue Lawrence hints at here and throughout the early chapters of the book. My argument is that the *blood* forecasts a would-be bond rather than records an actual or immediate special Paul-Gertrude tie. The drawer scene marks a second 'baptism' of Paul, but by now the emphasis is not on the 'good news' this potential 'saviour' will bring to his mother rather than on his suffering as a result of the parents' ongoing conflict.

Significantly enough, Paul is a child with 'glistening' hair; something which links him with the 'innocent' Victorian literary children.¹⁵ In Paul's case, however, the literary Victorian cliché does not stand only for his innocence. Lawrence makes a halo out of Paul's blond hair. Mrs Morel has already called Paul her 'lamb' (SL 50), and her blood dropping on the baby's halo-like hair becomes yet another ominous sign as to how the mother-son relationship would evolve. Her blood symbolises the strong influence she would exert for years on her emotionally-dependent son.

While Lawrence constantly highlights Paul's dependence upon Mrs Morel, he is also careful not to present it as a sign of a mutual mother-son attachment. To think otherwise is to misconstrue the most important source of Paul's childhood tensions. It is true that from the start Sons and Lovers is about a special mother-son bond. This bond, however, is not between Paul and Mrs Morel but between her and the eldest son William.

3. THE 'CASTING OFF' OF ARTHUR AND PAUL, THE TAKING ON OF WILLIAM

Mrs Morel epitomises those who try hard to rise above the wretched conditions they find themselves in either because of birth or as a result of their own unfortunate errors of judgement. Improving one's lot in life is so important to this ambitious woman that even when she realises that she can no longer hope to achieve anything personally, she never stops aspiring to challenge the status quo. This explains, to some extent, why she always encourages her children to succeed in life. Occasionally her attitude to her sons' achievements seems to suggest that their success matters more to her than to them:

He [William] was away in London, doing well. Paul would be working in Nottingham. Now she had two sons in the world. She could think of two places, great centres of industry, and feel that she had put a man into each of them, that these men would work out what *she* wanted; they were derived from her, they were of her, and their works also would be hers. (SL 127)

Out of context this passage can well be taken to imply that Mrs Morel 'employs' her children, possesses and takes pride in them and their achievement, simply as a selfish, egoistic person. In its uncut version, however, the novel gives another picture of Mrs Morel. She is no longer the mother whose sons, as a critic claims, 'become the channels into which she pours her long dammed up spiritual energy, and she cannot help using them destructively to break a way through the walls separating her from a larger world'.¹⁶ The tendency to use her children as 'tools' to make for her own failures in life is traceable in her relationships with them. Yet this is hardly the main issue in the last stage of the writing of the novel. In one of the early versions of 'Paul Morel', for instance, Mrs Morel 'uses' one of her sons for purely selfish purposes:

And her heart yearned over him. But her inward soul needed fulfilment, relentlessly. So much she had to give to the world, to life, and this she must give through one medium or another. She hoped <for> [that] William might be this medium. She hoped that he, almost like a lover, might take out of her soul what stuff she had to present to <the> life, and enact it. Some force, some vitality of her own individual soul lay as yet unused. She wanted to get it forth, to give it to the world, through the medium of her son. Mary first, and then Jesus.¹⁷

In the ultimate version of the book the same passage undergoes significant changes, which illustrate a new type of relationship between the mother and her son/s in general:

She did not know what she wanted him to do. Perhaps she only wanted him to be himself, to develop and bring to fruit all that she had put into him. In him, she wanted to see her life's fruition, that was all. (SL 77)

This kind of mother-son relationship has not been acknowledged so far because Edward Garnett chose to prune severely this and similar passages. Mrs Morel wants her children to succeed in life first for themselves and then for her. If she is so persistent in her efforts not to allow her sons to be miners, encourages all her children to pursue education and careers, pushes them to leave the narrow-minded local community for the 'great centres of industry', she acts not as a narrow-minded, self-centred, possessive and selfish mother, but like so many other ambitious working-class mothers in England by the end of the nineteenth century. Mrs Morel is one of Lawrence's most memorable characters, and certainly, the unparalleled mother figure whose ambition and relentless efforts to challenge the present, inspire her children to aspire and never be pleased with what life offers them: 'She thought and waited for them, dreamed what they would do, with herself behind them as motor force, when they grew up' (SL 44).

If there is any weak point in the Mrs Morel character as a mother this is not linked with her being selfish or making use of her children, but with her tendency to consider her eldest son William as the only child capable of outstanding achievements. From the start William is described as a healthy, 'winsome', 'pretty' (SL 23), 'big boy'. He is 'top of the class', 'the smartest lad in the school' (SL 63), 'a very clever boy' (SL 69), 'could run like the wind', wins prizes, is praised by everybody (SL 70), gets on 'rapidly' in Nottingham where he studies 'hard' (SL 78), and does 'well' in London (SL 127). In short, 'All the things that men do - the decent things - William did' (SL 70). All find him '*such* a fine fellow' (SL 107).

The general belief so far has been that Lawrence introduced William for the first time in 'Paul Morel' III. In 1935 Jessie Chambers recalled that, when she had first read

the second draft of the novel, she was surprised that Lawrence 'had omitted the story of Ernest'.¹⁸ The discovery of the surviving fragments of this version, however, reveals that the William character is present in it. Apparently Jessie chose to ignore or underestimate what Lawrence had written because he had shown the manuscript to others before her.¹⁹

Moreover, the initial chapter plan of the 1910 'Paul Morel' shows that the William character, who at this early stage is called 'Fred', was from the start one of Lawrence's main concerns: Fred goes to the office, dances, and quarrels with father much in the same way as the William of the subsequent drafts of the novel.²⁰ If Jessie indeed helped Lawrence at all regarding the Ernest/William figure her contribution consists perhaps in that she made Lawrence aware for the first time of the important role the eldest brother could play in the early life of Paul the would-be artist. This is probably why in the last two versions of the novel Lawrence starts paying unprecedented attention to the Mrs Morel-William relation.

This new William is always attentive to his mother, listens 'as if spell-bound' when she tells him stories, bristles with 'a small boy's pride' of her for 'no other woman looked such a lady as she did' (SL 12), and is always sensitive as to how she feels towards him. He takes part in races only to win prizes for the mother: 'The boy only ran for her' (SL 70).

What makes William's attachment to his mother so special is that she never fails to acknowledge and reciprocate his attention and devotion. William is her first child, and he 'came just when her own bitterness of disillusion was hardest to bear; when her faith in life was shaken, and her soul felt dreary and lonely' (SL 22). From the first Mrs Morel makes 'much' of William; he is 'a joy' to her (SL 23), her only hope. When he is still a boy she 'saw him a man, young, full of vigour, making the world glow again for her' (SL 63). She always 'loved him so much. More than that, she hoped in him so much. Almost she lived by him' (SL 79). The mother brims with 'pride' (SL 78) whenever William achieves something. Even a simple prize he wins in a race - an inkstand of glass - gives her 'a keen pleasure': 'She took it like a queen' (SL 70).

Sons and Lovers is a novel of striking contrasting relationships. The Mrs Morel-William relation is the first which stands out distinctively from a web of relations, and continues to dominate as the only special mother-son bond throughout Part I of the book. The pride the mother takes in William is unparalleled and contrasts sharply with how she feels or what she says about her other children.

Annie, for instance, never becomes Mrs Morel's 'special' child, although she is her only daughter. From the first there is nothing striking about Annie. When she is small she is whining most of the time (SL 11), wailing and weeping (SL 82), and when she grows up she is a 'flybie-skybie', a 'tom-boy' (SL 82) racing 'wildly at lerky, with the other young wild-cats of the Bottoms' (SL 82). To Mrs Morel, Annie remains to the end 'not one of the deep sort' (SL 197).

The mother hardly has any high opinion of her youngest son Arthur either. He is 'careless', 'impulsive', and makes 'a great moan' if he has to work hard. As he grows older his temper becomes 'uncertain'. He thinks only of himself, and hates 'all that stood in his way' when he wants amusement (SL 141). Always 'restless' (SL 287), whenever he is in trouble the 'spoilt' boy (SL 78) moans and groans 'ceaselessly' (SL 141) to his mother. Mrs Morel admits she does not like her 'irresponsible' (SL 221) youngest son best: 'he wearies me....I'd rather he showed some of a man's common-sense' (SL 218).

It is worth noting, however, that both Annie and Arthur are not such 'nonentities' in the early drafts of the novel. Nor is Mrs Morel so unimpressed or critical about them. In the first version, for example, Annie holds candle-lit story telling sessions, none of which survives in the final manuscript.²¹

Dropping the intellectual aspect of a figure like Annie may seem insignificant considering that even in the early drafts she is hardly a major character. The same pattern of change, however, is traceable even in Arthur's case. If in 'Paul Morel' II Arthur is a successful college boy, in the versions that followed nothing is mentioned about his college career. Apparently, Annie and Arthur diminish as intellectual, successful figures for structural reasons. Yet the emergence of William as an important

figure also seems to have played a major role in their metamorphoses. In an attempt to bring the William character into prominence, to depict him as a promising young man who is also closely attached to his mother, Lawrence reduced to a minimum the significance and actual appearance of Annie and Arthur in the third and fourth versions of the book.²²

Like Annie and Arthur, Paul undergoes an ongoing process of metamorphosis from the first to the last manuscript; he also moves from 'prominence' to 'obscurity'. Unlike his two siblings, though, this transformation does not render Paul into a minor or inconsistent character. On the contrary, as a direct result of such changes, Paul is gradually made a much more subtle figure.

There is a curious remark in the little that has survived from the notes Edward Garnett wrote to Lawrence on 'Paul Morel' III: 'you are insensibly making Paul too much of a hero'.²³ It is not known if Garnett voiced any objections of this nature about the earlier conception of Paul. What has survived from 'Paul Morel' II, though, indicates that it is here rather than in the third draft that Lawrence glorifies 'insensibly' the main protagonist. Impressed by his painting of wallflowers, Miss May, who gives Paul painting lessons, remarks:

'...they have something about them - a ⟨sort⟩ [kind] of glisten in their darkness - quite a touch of genius, Paul.'

Paul coloured, was very glad.

'If I am a genius,' he thought, 'what will my mother say. That will be the thing she'd like most, to have a genius for a son.'

Whereupon he fervently hoped he were a genius, although he was convinced that, of himself, he was nothing [of the sort]. Perhaps, though, he might be turned so as to catch the light of God at an angle sometimes, and the light would break into ⟨shad⟩ colours.²⁴

Paul's thinking about Mrs Morel's wish to have a genius for a son echoes another scene, which has not survived except in what Jessie Chambers recalls about it in her record of Lawrence: a minister 'gave the boy Paul a box of paints, and the mother's heart glowed with pride as she saw her son's budding power'.²⁵ In another instance it is

Paul himself who 'brags' about his potential. Recuperating from pneumonia that strikes him directly after Mr Morel's death, Paul talks confidently about being 'great'.²⁶

The three scenes above suggest that being a 'genius' and 'great' matters to Paul as much as to his mother. In fact, it is mainly because of her that the issue seems to be of such interest to Paul. After all, he himself is convinced that he is not a genius; he rather hopes to be something 'of the sort'.

Lawrence's tendency to conceive Paul as a prodigy indicates the 'sentimental' quality of 'Paul Morel' II,²⁷ and the 'danger of turning [it] into romance'.²⁸ It also reveals that, when he started the third novel, Lawrence was depending on catalytic devices much in the same way as he had done in his first two novels. In The White Peacock 'rabbits' are employed to alienate the unimaginative characters from the valley, and in The Trespasser Hampson is introduced with the purpose of enhancing Siegmund's self-awareness, and to warn him of the threat a dreaming woman like Helena poses to him.

Lawrence's depiction of child Paul as a genius in the early drafts of 'Paul Morel' is an indication of the difficulties he was facing in handling the artist-mother relation at this early stage. Apparently, Lawrence intended to use Paul's 'genius' to make Mrs Morel take a special interest in him. Making Paul a prodigy, though, helped Lawrence no more than other catalytic devices in the first two novels. In Sons and Lovers, however, Lawrence dropped the artificial device early enough. From the third draft onwards Lawrence would no longer refer to Paul as a 'genius'.

This crucial change was made possible because of William's emergence as a pivotal character in Part I. William himself is not depicted as a genius. Yet he is able to absorb completely Mrs Morel's attention. In 'Paul Morel' III William superseded Paul completely as the favourite son of Mrs Morel. To realise this Lawrence drops almost everything that showed how closely Paul and his mother were in the early versions. So for instance, Lawrence deleted in the ultimate draft '\, but particularly to Paul.)'²⁹ immediately after the statement that when Mrs Morel cannot bear herself 'the feeling was transmitted to the children' (SL 85). By now it is William who becomes the child

to whom the mother tells everything: 'Mrs Morel always had a lot of news on Monday nights, so that the children liked William to be in when their mother came home, because she told him things' (SL 69).

The artificially patched-up Paul-mother relationship of 'Paul Morel' II gave place in the third and fourth versions to the convincingly presented William-Mrs Morel attachment. In 'Paul Morel' II William began to play the role which until then Paul had tried but failed to perform convincingly. With the emergence of William as Mrs Morel's prime pride and hope Lawrence would no longer need to diffuse or romanticise what John Worthen calls, 'his early life's actual conflicts'.³⁰ The new William-mother relationship marks a watershed in the way Lawrence would conceive the initial stage of the Paul-Mrs Morel relation in 'Paul Morel' III and IV. The reciprocal mother-William attachment becomes the main source of Paul's childhood tensions.

This crucial aspect in the early life of Paul the artist is one of the least studied areas in the novel. Apparently, commentators have not paid enough attention to the William-Gertrude relationship, and to the impact this has on child Paul, not because Lawrence offers a sketchy picture of this unique mother-son bond, but because it was made so by Edward Garnett's editing. Garnett chose to cut most liberally those parts of the novel that highlight the strong William-Mrs Morel attachment, thus rendering incomprehensible what is so important in the early formative stage of the artistic Paul.

4. THE ARTIST AND THE 'RIVAL' BROTHER

The artist in Sons and Lovers is more transparent a figure than his predecessors because it is here that Lawrence begins to pay unprecedented attention to the formative stage of childhood. Part I of the novel is devoted exclusively to Paul's early years, thus offering a clear picture of the crucial role some events, people and factors play in fostering the artist in him. In particular, Paul's early years throw light on one of his fundamental traits. Paul's childhood is the seed-bed of his artistic sensitivity.

Paul's sensitive nature is highlighted from the start. He is still a baby when Mrs Morel notices 'the peculiar knitting' of its brows, and 'the peculiar heaviness of its eyes, as if it were trying to understand something that was pain' (SL 50). The same is noticed by the neighbour Mrs Kirk who remarks that the child 'looks as if he was thinking about something - quite sorrowful'. Mrs Morel, who by now feels guilty for having regretted the pregnancy in the first place, interprets its infantile sorrow as a reproach to her:

She felt, when she looked at the child's dark, brooding pupils, as if a burden were on her heart....Suddenly, looking at him, the heavy feeling at the mother's heart melted into passionate grief. She bowed over him, and a few tears shook swiftly out of her very heart. The baby lifted his fingers....looking up at her. It had blue eyes like her own, but its look was heavy, steady, as if it had realised something that had stunned some point of its soul.

In her arms lay the delicate baby. Its deep blue eyes, always looking up at her unblinking, seemed to draw her innermost thoughts out of her...Its clear, knowing eyes gave her pain and fear. Did it know all about her? When it lay under her heart, had it been listening then? Was there a reproach in the look? She felt the marrow melt in her bones, with fear, and pain. (SL 50-1).

At first glance it seems as if Lawrence is overdoing this symbolic scene by transplanting a 'conscience' to a newly-born baby. This incongruity is dispelled considerably, however, if the scene is not read in isolation but as an introduction to other related symbolic moments in which the sensitive child displays his growing unhappiness and frustration at his mother's attitude towards him. In the present scene this link is not very obvious because the book records no other cases in which Paul is 'critical' of his mother for not having wanted him.

Being too small to articulate himself, Paul's growing uneasiness appears somehow mysterious, and so not directly linked with his mother. This is particularly the case when he has 'fits of depression':

Then the mother would find the boy of three or four crying on the sofa.

'What's the matter?' she asked, and got no answer.

'What's the matter?' she insisted, getting cross.

'I don't know,' sobbed the child.

So she tried to reason him out of it, or to amuse him, but without effect. It made her feel beside herself....And then she carried the child into the yard, plumped him into his little chair, and said:

'Now cry there, Misery!' (SL 64)

It has been suggested that Paul's crying seems to illustrate the kind which D. W. Winnicott calls 'sad crying':

something which means that your infant has...started to take responsibility for environment. Instead of just reacting to circumstances he has come to feel responsible for the circumstances. The trouble is that he starts off feeling *totally* responsible for what happens to him and for the external factors in his life. Only gradually does he sort out what he *is* responsible for from all that he *feels* responsible for.³¹

Winnicott's acclaimed theories were unknown in the 1900s, and Sons and Lovers displays clearly Lawrence's ability to anticipate what this and other noted psychologists such as Melanie Klein would write on the child. Lawrence is very good at depicting the child's inarticulate feelings, and the scene above is one of the early steps in artistic Paul's 'weary struggle into consciousness'³² during his troubled childhood.

Lawrence included the scene of Paul's 'fits of depression' for the first time in 'Paul Morel' II. At this stage, however, there seems to be an apparent cause for his unhappiness. The surviving fragment of the third chapter of this draft recounts Paul's casting aside by Mrs Morel into the care of a nurse when the third son Arthur is born. By the time he experiences this 'estrangement' from his mother Paul is seventeen months old. Apparently Lawrence meant Arthur's birth and 'casting off' of Paul as the initial reason for Paul's unhappiness. This becomes clear particularly in the following Chapter IV 'Paul Morel's First Glimpses of Life' in which Lawrence highlights further the mother's fondness for Arthur. By now Paul is four, and it is at this age that he experiences his first bouts of 'motiveless' weeping.

In 'Paul Morel' III Lawrence abbreviated considerably the account of Arthur's birth because of the emergence of William as a major character and the 'chosen' son of Mrs Morel. Only three pages survive from Chapter IV of 'Paul Morel' III now entitled 'Glimpses of Early Life'. The fragment makes particular mention of the sickly and colourless Paul who follows chattering at his mother's heels all day.³³ The implication here is that Paul fails in his attempts to attract his mother's attention. This is not to suggest that Mrs Morel ignores Paul or any other child for the sake of William because

she remains a devoted, loving and caring mother for all her children until her death, but that Paul feels he does not have the special attention which he as a sensitive child demands.

Probably Lawrence makes no direct mention in 'Paul Morel' III of Paul's being 'cast aside' by Mrs Morel because he wanted to keep intact the memory of his own mother. It is also possible that in making Paul cry for seemingly no motives, Lawrence wants to stress that 'hypersensitiveness' (SL 97) is an inborn quality in Paul the artist since his early childhood.

No matter what reason/s Lawrence may have had in mind when he decided to leave 'obscure' the motive of Paul's weeping, it is obvious that Paul's fits of depression are linked primarily with William. It is no coincidence perhaps that the opening lines of the 'fits of depression' scene juxtapose briefly but strikingly William and Paul, and a passing remark is made to the early state of the Paul-Mrs Morel relation: 'Meanwhile William grew bigger and stronger and more active, while Paul, always rather delicate and quiet, got slimmer, and trotted after his mother like her shadow' (SL 64). Part I of Sons and Lovers abounds in such contrasting bits of the two brothers' portraits through which Lawrence gives prominence to William not only to intensify Paul's 'isolation',³⁴ but also his growing frustration.

Although William's superiority and close relationship with his mother are apparently the main causes of Paul's childhood troubles, Lawrence is careful not to present the William-Paul relation as an open 'conflict' between two 'rival' brothers. The William figure is based largely on Lawrence's brother Ernest, and the two brothers were on very good terms. This is probably why on the whole the William-Paul relationship is described in the main as friendly.³⁵

Although this is one of the most interesting relations in the artist's early life, its importance has been largely ignored. Edward Garnett's cutting rendered this special relation insignificant, to the point of being almost non-existent. So, for instance, Garnett dropped some crucial passages in Chapter III which disclose William's 'amiable patronage' of Paul.³⁶ It is in deleted scenes such as this one in which Paul helps William

to get ready for the fancy dress ball, and collect 'birds and flowers' of William's love-letters that the nature of the two brothers' relationship becomes apparent. As usual when they are together it is William who does most of the talking, whereas Paul, who is mostly silent, approves 'reverently' (SL 76) whatever his brother says. Paul's 'veneration' indicates his acknowledgement of William's superiority: 'He could not aspire to his brother's brawn stature, being slight and small himself' (SL 77).

This conclusion Paul comes to rather early in his life explains somehow why he avoids open 'confrontation' with William. Moreover, Paul's non-confrontation policy towards the brother indicates that he is fully aware of how his mother feels towards her eldest son. Paul's veneration for William is a manifestation of Paul's veneration for his mother: he would never challenge what is so dear to her. This explains why long after William's death Paul is always keen to leave intact Mrs Morel's almost 'sacred' image and memory of him. Miriam believes she discovers in Paul 'a rare potentiality', 'his loneliness', when during a walk she comes upon him 'who stood bent over something, his mind fixed on it, working away steadily, patiently, a little hopelessly' (SL 201), but is greatly surprised and disappointed when she learns why he feels so lost:

'It is only an old umbrella, isn't it?' she asked.

She wondered why he, who did not usually trouble over trifles, made such a mountain of this molehill.

'But it was William's - an' my mother can't help but know,' he said quietly, still patiently working at the umbrella. (SL 202)

Paul's capacity for emotional understanding of his mother is a clear sign of his 'superiority' over William. Although William is closely attached to Mrs Morel, he very often 'forgets' her (SL 76) for the sake of pursuing his pleasures, which she strongly disapproves of. No matter how close they are, William never seems to realise how much he means to her. When he begins work in London, it 'never occurred to him that she might be more hurt at his going away, than glad of his success' (SL 78-9).

Unlike William, Paul 'was so conscious of what other people felt, particularly his mother' (SL 82) since he was a small child. Under no circumstances would he say to Mrs Morel that William is 'nasty' (SL 44), as William calls Paul when he becomes

irritated by the attention the mother pays to his newly-born brother. The novel records plainly only once that Paul is 'jealous of his brother' (SL 93), but even here it is not Paul who confesses his true feelings for William but the narrator who makes a statement on behalf of Paul.

But if Paul is always careful not to admit openly that he is envious and jealous of William, he would never come to terms with the special relationship that links his mother and William. Paul would not miss any opportunity to 'undermine' Mrs Morel's image of William, yet he is always cautious to do this in a very subtle way. This is seen best perhaps when Paul and his mother discuss how to pay for his season ticket. This scene is rather long, but it is worth quoting in full for the considerable insight it offers into Paul's cunning 'tactic':

At last she said:

'That William promised me, when he went to London, as he'd give me a pound a month. He has given me ten shillings-twice: and now I know he hasn't a farthing if I asked him. Not that I want it. Only just now, you'd think he might be able to help with this ticket, which I'd never expected.'

'He earns a lot,' said Paul.

'He earns a hundred and thirty pounds. But they're all alike. They're large in promises, but it's precious little fulfilment you get.'

'He spends over fifty shillings a week on himself,' said Paul.

'And I keep this house on less than thirty,' she replied, 'and am supposed to find money for extras. But they don't care about helping you, once they've gone. He'd rather spend it on that dressed-up creature.'

'She should have her own money, if she's so grand,' said Paul.

'She should, but she hasn't. I asked him. - And *I* know he doesn't buy her a gold bangle for nothing. I wonder who ever bought *me* a gold bangle.'

'Well, you never wanted one.'

'No, I didn't - but it would have been all the same if I had.'

'Didn't my father ever buy you things?'

'Yes - one half-pound of apples - and that was all - every penny he spent on me, before we were married.'

'Why?'

'Because I was silly, and when he said "What should I buy thee?" I told him "Nothing". But bring me anything! - it never occurred to him. And William wouldn't buy gold bangles, except for a fol-de-lol who makes great pretensions.'

'And I'll bet she'd got plenty,' said the boy.

'Got plenty, ay! But he'd have to give her another, to seem so grand as well. What does he care, really! I can keep him while he's earning a few shillings, and then, as soon as his money is anything like, and one might feel a bit of peace

and security, he goes away, and it's the same struggle over again, nowhere to turn to when there's anything needed, nobody to do you a hand's turn.'

'You should ask him.'

'Yes, and he'd have to borrow it. I could borrow it myself, if it came to that. I'm sure I'm not going to be beholden to him for anything I have to ask him for. He needn't write to me, singing her praises, and saying the operas they've been to. I don't want to hear. A fat lot of thought he has for me, I must say. -But there, they don't care! They've got their own lives to live, and their own way to go, and what am I to him. But a nuisance I will never be, nor ask him for anything. - And I hope your father will live long enough, till I am gone. For it's a poor tale, if you have to be dependent on your children.'

'Well mother - I s'll be earning soon - an' you can always have my money, 'cause I s'll never get married.'

'It's an old tale, and one William was always preaching. Wait a bit, and your tune will alter.'

'It won't.'

'Very well.' (SL 124-5)

At first glance it seems as if Paul's main interest here is simply to show sympathy for his mother's difficulties. The scene, however, goes beyond sharing. It has been observed that Paul is a 'cunning' figure, and the passage above shows that his shrewdness has its roots in his childhood. Most of the talking here is done by the mother. Yet what little Paul says does not diminish the importance of his presence. Paul's remarks seem to contrast with what the mother says on William's girlfriend Louis, and Mr Morel; unlike her, Paul finds fault with or blames none of them directly. Nor does he take sides with her. The impression is that he even does not take much interest in the topic under discussion; his remarks sound off-hand, and seem to come from a 'naive' thirteen-year-old boy.

Although Paul sounds so uninterested, and what he says comes mostly in the form of very short statements, it is he who controls the discourse. Paul is aware his mother is upset with William for endangering his road to success because of the attention he pays to a girl like 'Gyp'. Likewise, Paul knows that Mrs Morel is disillusioned with her own marriage. The intimate knowledge Paul has about her dislikes and frustrations helps him to 'manipulate' her feelings and the discussion. At first the tone of what the mother says about William is not 'aggressive'; she simply regrets that now she needs some help he is unable to assist her. Directly after Paul's first remark - 'He earns a lot' - though, Mrs Morel's tone changes dramatically. Paul does not mention how much

William earns, but implies that his brother earns enough to be able to help the mother. This leads Mrs Morel to mention the exact sum of William's annual income - a hundred and thirty pounds - and it is now that her first sign of irritation shows. Paul's second remark suggests that he is fully aware of William's financial situation; he knows precisely how much his brother spends. As in the first remark, what Paul implies in the second statement is more significant than what he actually says. Paul is ambiguous on purpose when he says William 'spends over fifty shillings a week on himself' because he does not want to mention that his brother wastes all that money to gratify the whims of his vain girlfriend. It is Mrs Morel who puts it plainly that William is such a spendthrift because of his 'dressed-up creature'. To 'irritate' his mother further Paul implies that Gyp is not as 'grand' as William makes her, and that she is exploiting her snobbish 'Chubby'. After this Mrs Morel becomes more irritable because, unlike Gyp, she has never had a gold bangle. This complaint gives Paul a chance to remind her how much she has been disappointed and disillusioned by her husband as well. Even now, though, Paul continues to play the role of the naive child who does not seem to know much about his parents' relation. Paul does not accuse his father just as he does not accuse William of anything, but the mother is as much annoyed by her husband as she is by her eldest son. Indirectly Paul is making her see that she has been disappointed twice in her life: first by the men she has married, and now by her 'chosen' son William.

Although at this stage Paul is interested in alienating his mother from his father as much as possible - the Freudian element is often present in the book - William remains the main 'opponent'. Not only does Paul want to open his mother's eyes so that she could see that William whom she idolises has 'ignored' her for someone else, but also that this 'someone' is worthless and, above all, a woman of doubtful morals. Gyp has got 'plenty' of gold bangles just as she has many near-naked photographs, and gloves (SL 160) because she is never short of admirers.

Although he has succeeded in making mother give vent to her pent-up frustration with William, Paul shows no open sympathy for her. Instead he seems to find fault with her for not having approached William for help. Like Mrs Morel, Paul knows

William would be unable to offer her any financial support. Yet Paul urges her to contact William so that she would admit she can no longer rely on her eldest son. And she eventually does. Only now Paul thinks the moment is ripe to offer her his own financial assistance and to assure her that, unlike William, he would never let her down for a girlfriend.

Although Paul is 'shrewd' in his efforts to alienate the mother from her husband and particularly from William, Lawrence is careful not to present the artist in his childhood as an 'intriguer'. The emphasis throughout Part I is not on Paul's attempts to 'denigrate' his 'rivals' but on his strenuous efforts to make the mother aware of his own worth. No other Lawrentian literary child manifests Paul's determination to attract his mother's attention.

In the novel's ultimate version Lawrence highlights further Paul's determination to be recognised by Mrs Morel partly because by now he is no longer presented as a prodigy. This important change seems to 'justify' somehow his mother's failure to 'notice' him. All the same, the lack of an outstanding ability hardly makes Paul an ordinary boy. He may not be as healthy and strong and successful as William, yet Paul is a unique child, even more unique than his successful eldest brother. Paul's uniqueness, however, is of a different kind. He stands out from his siblings mainly because of his multi-dimensional 'hypersensitiveness' (SL 97).

Lawrence pays special attention to Paul's sensitiveness throughout the novel but mainly in the early chapters. The emphasis in Part I is not that the child Paul *is* but how he *becomes* so sensitive; it is here that Lawrence uncovers gradually how the artist in Paul is being born. The factors that influence Paul's artistic sensitivity as a child are many. Among such factors, though, none is so important as the formative impact his parents - particularly his mother - have on stimulating and fostering this future artist's sensitivity to language and nature.

5. PARENTS' IMPACT ON THE WOULD-BE ARTIST'S SENSITIVITY TO LANGUAGE AND NATURE

From the start of Sons and Lovers Paul is described as being 'very fond of drawing' (SL 98), and 'quite a clever painter, for a boy of his years' (SL 113). But painting is not the only thing he is interested in or good at during the early years. Paul's mastery of language also is so conspicuous during his childhood that one wonders if he is not a potential writer as much as a future painter and designer.

In his attempts to attract his mother's attention, Paul strives to be constantly attuned to her feelings, and language offers him a unique means through which he tries to reach her. Mrs Morel is the only person in her family who uses 'pure' English (SL 17), clips 'her language very clear and precise' (SL 366) all the time. As a child Paul considers the way she speaks as the only acceptable one, and is inclined to criticise anyone who talks otherwise. He is particularly critical of the ungrammatical speech of the cashier, the clerk and the miners, and would waste no time to voice his irritation to his mother who, in his eyes, stands out distinctly from the uncouth working men of Bestwood: "They're hateful, and common, and hateful, they are, and I'm not going any more. Mr Braithwaite drops his 'h's' an' Mr Winterbottom says 'you was'" (SL 97).

His mother, however, is not the only person in the household to play an important role in the artist's acquisition of language during childhood. Mr Morel shapes Paul's linguistic consciousness not less than Mrs Morel. The father is a dialect speaker for most of the time, but he too can speak 'pure' English if he chooses to do so. He is also a wonderful story-teller: 'Morel had a warm way of telling a story. He made one feel Taffy's cunning' (SL 89).

But Mr Morel's language is that of an uneducated miner. He is often inarticulate, and at times unable to explain the meaning of the words and expressions he uses. 'Eh I dunno - that's what they say,' (SL 235) he replies when Paul asks him to explain what to be dead as a door-knob means. Mr Morel's language is imitative - no wonder he is 'a good mimic' (SL 25) - acquired spontaneously, so it is inevitable that he finds it

impossible to comprehend the logic behind a linguistic message of someone who does not belong to his world. 'But tha writes i' such a fashion, I canna ma'e it out,' he complains to Paul (SL 419).

There is no such communication barrier between Paul and his mother. Ironical, sharp, witty, and determined, the message of Mrs Morel is clear and concise because she is 'a master with words'.³⁷ She often sums up in one or two words what she thinks is essential about some characters; she labels one of her neighbours as a 'snipey vixen' (SL 67), and 'loud-mouthed creature' (SL 68), William's country girl/s as a 'brazen hussy', 'brazen baggages' (SL 75), 'silly hussies', 'silly lunatics' (SL 79), and 'common cats' (SL 80), Gyp as a 'dressed-up creature' (SL 124), and a 'fol-de-lol' (SL 125), Annie as a 'flybie-skybie' (SL 82), and Mr Morel as a 'pulamiter' (SL 236). Under the direct influence of his mother, Paul tries to characterise people as briefly and accurately as possible. He calls Polly a 'robinet' (SL 136), Beatrice a 'vixen' (SL 243), Miriam 'a beggar for love' (SL 257), Clara 'Nevermore' (SL 271), and himself a 'ranter' (SL 294). Linguistic precision becomes a norm in Paul's speech and he intervenes when someone uses words incorrectly. When Miriam calls some daffodils 'magnificent' he corrects her: 'Magnificent! - -it's a bit thick! - they're pretty!' (SL 257).

Paul's linguistic skills include accuracy but also the ability to employ language manipulatively. Unlike his father who finds himself into trouble with employers because he mimics them, with Paul language is a useful instrument. He employs it dextrously to 'lure' or 'shun' those whom he needs or wants to free himself from. Language manipulation helps this artist considerably in his quest for fulfilment and freedom.

Paul has used language manipulatively since childhood. Often when he talks to Mrs Morel, Paul uses words and expressions which one does not normally expects to hear from someone who is 'quite small' (SL 94). Apparently, the language Paul employs is part of his efforts to please his mother, to voice his sympathy for her, to praise whatever she says or does. Unlike his siblings, he misses no opportunity to flatter her,

and at times his 'servile' attitude is somehow pathetic. This is apparent particularly in his remarks directly after one of her shopping extravagances:

'Oh that pot man!' she said, closing the oven door. 'You know what a wretch I've said he was. Well, I don't think he's quite so bad.'

'Don't you?'

The boy was attentive to her. She took off her little black bonnet.

'No - I think he can't make any money - well, it's everybody's cry alike nowadays - and it makes him disagreeable.'

'It would *me*,' said Paul.

'Well, one can't wonder at it. - And he let me have - how much do you think he let me have *this* for?'

She took the dish out of its rag of newspaper, and stood looking on it with joy.

'Show me!' said Paul.

The two stood together gloating over the dish.

'I *love* cornflowers on things,' said Paul.

'Yes, and I thought of the teapot you bought me - '

'Once and three,' said Paul.

'Fivepence!'

'It's not enough, mother.'

'No. Do you know, I fairly sneaked off with it. But I'd been extravagant, I couldn't afford any more. And he needn't have let me have it if he hadn't wanted to.'

'No, he needn't, need he,' said Paul, and the two comforted each other from the fear of having robbed the pot-man.

'We c'n have stewed fruit in it,' said Paul.

'Or custard, or a jelly,' said his mother.

'Or radishes and lettuce,' said he. (SL 99-100)

As it is always the case when he chats to his mother, even here Paul would not venture an opinion about anything unless he is certain that whatever he utters will not annoy her. Being aware that she does not like the pot-man, Paul does not hasten to approve of her words when she admits she has been wrong to have called him 'a wretch'. The 'attentive' boy wants to make sure she really means what she says. Only when reassured about her new attitude towards the pot-man Paul agrees with Mrs Morel that he is 'not so bad'. And to make her feel that she is right to sympathise with the complaining trader Paul adds, as if he is a grown up, that lack of money would make even him 'disagreeable'.

When Mrs Morel asks him to guess the price of the dish Paul avoids giving a direct answer. He speaks twice but what he says is elusive. He appreciates the design, but as

for the price of the article Mrs Morel has to ask him again before he suggests she has bought the dish for 'one and three'. When the mother reveals the actual price - 'Fivepence!' - Paul is apparently taken by surprise, and to make her feel good about her shopping abilities remarks that what she has paid is not enough. This makes Mrs Morel feel remorse for having 'robbed' the pot-man, but Paul is quick to repair his flattering 'mistake' by reassuring her that it has been a fair deal, and to divert her attention he suggests what they can use the dish for. The conversation resumes shortly, but by now Paul makes sure his reaction to the prices gives her no cause for concern:

'Oh, and I'm a wicked extravagant woman - I know I s'll come to want.'

He hopped to her side eagerly, to see her latest extravagance. She unfolded another lump of newspaper and disclosed some roots of pansies and of crimson daisies.

'Four penn'orth!' she moaned.

'How *cheap*!' he cried.

'Yes, but I couldn't afford it *this* week of all weeks.'

'But lovely!' he cried.

'Aren't they!' she exclaimed, giving way to pure joy. 'Paul - look at this yellow one - isn't it - ! - and a face just like an old man!'

'Just!' cried Paul, stooping to sniff. 'And smells that nice! But he's a bit splashed.'

He ran in the scullery, came back with the flannel, and carefully washed the pansy.

'Now look at him now he's wet!' said he.

'Yes!' she exclaimed, brimful of satisfaction. (SL 100)

Mrs Morel seems to regret the amount she has paid for pansies and daisies, but Paul wonders at it, and when she finds fault with herself for having bought them that particular week, he reassures her that the 'lovely' flowers have been worth buying. His words have an immediate impact on the mother, and she remarks joyfully that a pansy has 'a face just like an old man'. Not only Paul approves of the simile but he also transforms it in no time into a personification. He refers thrice to the pansy as 'he'. Paul's playful remarks and his careful washing of the personified flower make the mother forget all about her extravagance: she is 'brimful of satisfaction'.

This scene illustrates an important aspect of the mother-son bonding. It is one of the early cases in which they display their shared concerns for beauty and for non-material things, as well as their mastery of language.

Mrs Morel plays an important role also in stimulating and fostering Paul's sensitivity towards nature. As in the case of the language, however, the father influences Paul's attitude to nature not less than the mother. A natural man to the core, Mr Morel enjoys himself most when walking in fields, talking and drinking with haymakers, sleeping under an oak-tree (SL 29):

He loved the early morning. He always left the house at six, though the men were not turned down till about seven, and he had only a half hour's walk. Usually he went over the fields, and often, in summer, would look in the gin-close for mushrooms, straying through the thick wet grass in his pit-boots, looking for the lurking, white-fleshed things. If he found any, he stowed them carefully in his pocket. It scarcely seemed hard to him, to leave the fresh, cool air of morning, and go down. He was so used to it, it came simply and naturally. So he appeared at the pit top, often with a stalk from the hedge between his teeth, which he chewed all day to keep his mouth moist, down the mine, feeling quite as happy as when he was in the field. (SL 38-9)

Lawrence regretted later in his life that he had been unfair to his own father in Sons and Lovers. Passages like this one above, as well as other literary images of Arthur Lawrence in later works, particularly in the sketch 'Adolph' and in its companion piece 'Rex', however, give a charming image of the rough and often drunk miner. As Alastair Niven puts it, 'Lawrence's sympathy for Walter Morel in this novel may be greater than he himself fully realized'.³⁸ Mr Morel's love for birds and flowers as well as his habit of walk in the fields would inevitably impress Paul. Like his father, Paul 'loved being out in the country, among the bushes' (SL 93), and 'always examined the grass border, and the big grass bank, because in it grew tiny pansies and tiny forget me nots' (SL 94).

Partly because as a child Paul hates his father, and partly because Mr Morel is unable to express himself, however, son and father never have a walk or talk about nature together. Unlike her husband, Mrs Morel has a far more direct impact on Paul's attitude to nature mainly because she is always willing and able to impart her knowledge to him. The novel abounds in cases when she shares her excitement and joy over discovery of new flowers with Paul, thus bringing him constantly closer to nature. Mrs Morel is Paul's main source of information about nature. At thirteen Paul comes

to know about colours and smells of flowers much more than his elder brother William (SL 79), and in some cases he is even more knowledgeable than his mother (SL 123).

It could be argued that Paul's unusual nature lore and sensitivity to colours and smells of flowers come mainly as a result of his continuous efforts to please and impress Mrs Morel. While his walking in the fields is something Paul seems to have 'inherited' mostly from his father, the motive behind it is linked mainly with his mother:

Mrs Morel must buy fruit for puddings, on the Saturdays; also she liked blackberries. So Paul and Arthur scoured the coppices and woods and old quarries, so long as a blackberry was to be found, every week end going on their search. In that region of mining villages, blackberries became a comparative rarity. But Paul hunted far and wide. He loved being out in the country, among the bushes. But he also could not bear to go home to his mother empty. That, he felt, would disappoint her, and he would have died rather. (SL 92-3)

These early close contacts with nature play an important role in stimulating the future artist's sensitivity. It is as a child that Paul is introduced for the first time to shapes and colours and to what is beautiful and aesthetic in the natural world. It is no coincidence that this child of nature becomes a painter. Nor is it by chance that he paints mostly landscapes of his native countryside.

But if such walking and hunting 'far and wide' bring him so close to his 'beloved home valley' (SL 115), and exert a considerable formative influence on him as a future artist, they hardly bring about the change Paul wants to see in his mother's attitude to him. Paul's infant 'misery' extends throughout childhood because Mrs Morel fails to acknowledge the attempts of the sensitive son to attract her attention and to please her.

6. THE UNACKNOWLEDGED DEVOTION

In Sons and Lovers Lawrence avoids considerably the generalisations of the type seen often in the first two novels to explain why his artists' relationships with other characters are often uneasy or fail altogether. Instead of 'preaching', in his third novel

Lawrence explores what undermines or brings to an end the artist's relations with several people. From the first, through the Walter-Gertrude relationship, Lawrence emphasises that most of the characters in this book fail to communicate with each other. This break in communication affects to various degrees almost all Paul's relationships, but mainly his relation with Mrs Morel.

In the early chapters of the novel Lawrence pays special attention to Paul's attempts to make his mother realise how much he cares for her. In spite of his efforts, throughout Part I Paul fails to establish with her the kind of communication he wants. Mrs Morel remains largely ignorant of Paul's childish worries, of how much he cares for her. One of the early instances of Mrs Morel's failure to notice Paul's devotion for her occurs in the scene when he asks her 'anxiously' whether his father has arrived home from the pub:

'You can see he hasn't,' said Mrs Morel, cross with the futility of the question.

Then the boy dawdled about, near his mother. They shared the same anxiety. Presently Mrs Morel went and strained the potatoes.

"They're ruined and black," she said, 'but what do I care.' Not many words were spoken. Paul almost hated his mother for suffering because his father did not come home from work.

'What do you bother yourself for?' he said. 'If he wants to stop and get drunk, why don't you let him?'

'Let him!' flashed Mrs Morel. 'You may well say "let him."' (SL 86).

Although the narrator remarks that both mother and son 'shared the same anxiety', they are not anxious for one and the same reason. As usual Paul is cautious not to speak openly against the father, but the mother fails to understand this. Instead she considers his question about the father as futile. Only when she makes the remark about the potatoes, which he takes to be an expression of her anger towards her husband, Paul becomes more daring; he urges her, though indirectly, not to bother about her drunken husband. Even now, however, Mrs Morel fails to grasp his subtle message. Instead she responds angrily, thus making it impossible for him to continue the conversation. Now that the communication is broken, Paul can stand no longer the sense of anxiety and expectation in the room. Nor can he go out to play. What he

needs is someone who can understand him, and if his mother cannot, he tries to find a listening ear elsewhere:

So he ran in to Mrs Inger, next door but one, for her to talk to him. She had no children. Her husband was good to her, but he was in a shop, and came home late. So, when she saw the lad at the door, she called:

'Come in, Paul.'

The two sat talking for some time, when suddenly the boy rose, saying:

'Well, I'll be going and seeing if my mother wants an errand doing.'

He pretended to be perfectly cheerful, and did not tell his friend what ailed him. (SL 86-7)

As a direct result of the lack of communication with his mother, Paul suffers again something like the 'fits of depression' he went through first as a child of three or four. Although by now Paul's trouble appears to be linked with his health - being rather a delicate boy, subject to bronchitis, one day he comes home at dinner time feeling ill - the implication is that he suffers no less because of the state of his relationship with his mother. This explains probably, why differently from the equivalent passage in 'Paul Morel' II, here Lawrence makes no mention of Paul's having caught cold during a walk with William in the snow. The lack of communication between mother and son, and the reticence of the latter are what Lawrence highlights constantly in the ultimate version of the book:

'What's the matter with *you*?' his mother asked sharply.

'Nothing,' he replied.

But he ate no dinner.

'If you eat no dinner you're not going to school,' she said.

'Why?' he asked.

'That's why.' (SL 90)

Unable to communicate with her, however, Paul never stops adoring his mother in silence. He always feels sorry for her and cherishes the hope to make her happy some time. Watching the mother ironing, Paul's heart 'contract[s]' with love:

It hurt the boy keenly, this feeling about her, that she had never had her life's fulfilment: and his own incapability to make up to her hurt him with a sense of impotence, yet made him patiently dogged inside. It was his childish aim.

(SL 91)

It has been suggested that as a young boy Paul might be conscious of his mother's 'suffering' or 'self-denial', yet his understanding of life from which notions of 'rights', 'fulfilment', and 'disillusion' derive cannot be thought to come to him till a riper age.³⁹ This argument stands if this is a unique passage. Part I of the book, however, abounds in examples of Paul's exceptional sensitiveness as a child, and of his constant efforts to attract his mother's attention. If his siblings are willing to do anything to help 'economically', Paul's hunting 'far and wide' for blackberries is motivated mainly by the egoistic intention to impress her: 'The boy walked all day, went miles and miles, rather than own himself beaten, and come home to her empty-handed' (SL 93).

But Paul's 'childish aim' to please her goes unnoticed: 'She never realised this whilst he was young' (SL 93). Mrs Morel does not notice that of all her children, only Paul is willing to stay at home to help her bake the bread. Nor does she realise, and so does not thank Paul for, the care and help he offers her as she prepares to go to Nottingham to visit her husband in hospital:

'What time is there a train? I know I s'll have to go trailing to Keston. - I s'll have to leave that bedroom.'

'I can finish it,' said Paul.

'You needn't - I shall catch the seven o'clock back, I should think....'

Paul cleared away, put on the kettle, and set the table.

'There isn't a train till four-twenty,' he said. 'You've time enough.'

'Oh no I haven't !' she cried, blinking at him over the towel as she wiped her face.

'Yes you have - you must drink a cup of tea at any rate. Should I come with you to Keston?'

'Come with me, what for I should like to know!....'

Paul had laid the table. He cut his mother one or two pieces of very thin bread and butter.

'Here you are,' he said, putting her cup of tea in her place.

'I can't be bothered,' she exclaimed, crossly.

'Well you've got to, so there, now it's put out ready,' he insisted.

So she sat down and sipped her tea, and ate a little, in silence. She was thinking. (SL 109-10)

Lawrence makes no direct mention of the fact that Paul holds William responsible for his own failure to attract the mother's attention. The attitude he adopts immediately after William's sudden death, however, suggests that Paul had always known who

stood between himself and his mother. William's demise offers Paul the first chance to bring about the much coveted change in his relationship with Mrs Morel, and he wastes no time to avail himself of it. Paul's attitude immediately after receiving the news of William's tragic end displays something 'cruel' in this would-be artist.⁴⁰ In a very matter-of-fact way Paul tells those in the mine that his father has got to go to London, expressing no apparent sign of alarm or grief. He displays no emotion also when he breaks the news to Mr Morel:

'It is thee Paul!-is 'e worse?'

'You've got to go to London.'

The two walked off the pit bank, where men were watching curiously. As they came out, and went along the railway, with the sunny autumn field on one side, and a wall of trucks on the other, Morel said, in a frightened voice:

'E's niver gone, child?'

'Yes.'

'When wor't?'

The miner's voice was terrified.

'Last night - we had a telegram from my mother.'

Morel walked on a few strides, then leaned up against a truck side, his hand over his eyes. He was not crying. Paul stood looking round, waiting. On the weighing machine a truck trundled slowly. Paul saw everything, except his father leaning against the truck as if he were tired. (SL 167)

It has been suggested that here is a boy 'pained by the death of a brother'.⁴¹ Probably, but the one who is apparently too much distraught by the news is the father who tries but fails to put a bold face on it. As for Paul, he makes no effort to hide his grief because, apparently, he does not feel any strong pain for what has happened. What concerns Paul most now is how Mrs Morel is coping alone in the capital: 'And William is dead, and my mother's in London, and what will she be doing?' Paul asks himself 'as if it were a conundrum' (SL 167).

With William now dead, Paul seems to think that time has come for him to claim his mother for himself. His hopes, however, are shattered in no time. Mrs Morel is too shocked to notice him for some time after the tragedy. Paul experiences the first disappointment when he meets his parents on their arrival from London:

'Mother!' he said, in the darkness.

Mrs Morel's small figure seemed not to observe. He spoke again.

'Paul!' she said, uninterestedly. She let him kiss her, but she seemed unaware of him.

In the house she was the same, small, white, and mute. She noticed nothing, she said nothing, only:

'The coffin will be here tonight, Walter. You'd better see about some help.' Then, turning to the children: 'We're bringing him home.'

Then she relapsed into the same mute looking into space, her hands folded on her lap. Paul, looking at her, felt he could not breathe. The house was dead silent.

'I went to work, mother,' he said, plaintively.

'Did you,' she answered, dully. (SL 168)

When the coffin is brought home Mrs Morel sings 'softly': 'Oh my son - my son!', whereas Paul whimpers 'Mother!', 'his hand round her waist'. But the mother 'did not hear' Paul, who thinks that his brother's 'bright brown, ponderous coffin', 'would never be got out of the room again' (SL 170).

Paul's 'rivalry' with the dead brother makes for one of the most dramatic aspects of the book. After William's burial, Mrs Morel does not take notice of Paul. Nor does she listen to him, failing to notice how he beats his brain for news to tell her. Her attitude 'drove him almost insane':

'What's a-matter, mother?' he asked. She did not hear.

'What's a-matter?' he persisted. 'Mother, what's a-matter?'

'You know what's the matter,' she said, irritably, turning away. (SL 170)

Mrs Morel could not be persuaded to talk and take her 'old bright interest in life' because, for her, William's death means more than the loss of a son; this is a tragic turning point in her life that kills the hope in her.

The recognition of his inability to take the upper hand of his 'superior' brother, even now that he is dead, makes Paul feel 'cut off and wretched'. The ordeal lasts for three months. By the end of December Paul gives his mother with 'trembling' hands a Christmas box, but she puts it on the table without thanking him, thus incurring his reproach: 'You aren't glad' (SL 171). This is the moment when finally Paul admits he is 'badly'.

Paul's frustration over his relationship with his mother resembles strikingly with what the main character in the 1925 short story 'The Rocking-Horse Winner' goes through. Significantly enough even the protagonist of the story is called Paul Morel.

Although this latter Paul does not have to compete with a 'ghost' brother, like Paul of Sons and Lovers, he too strives hard to please his mother. In spite of his efforts, however, his mother fails to acknowledge his devotion, and so he dies. In Sons and Lovers, though, Mrs Morel finally does notice her devoted and caring son. She saves him at the climax of what is the third stage of his 'fits of depression':

Paul was very ill. His mother lay in bed at nights with him. They could not afford a nurse. He grew worse, and the crisis approached. One night he tossed into consciousness, in the ghastly, sickly feeling of dissolution, when all the cells in the body seem in intense irritability to be breaking down, and consciousness makes a last flare of struggle, like madness.

'I s'll die, mother!' he cried, heaving for breath on the pillow.

She lifted him up, crying in a small voice:

'Oh, my son, my son!'

That brought him to. He realised her. His whole will rose up and arrested him. He put his head on her breast, and took ease of her, for love. (SL 171)

In its earliest form this scene is traced in The Trespasser. In Chapter XII Siegmund remembers when he was a child and had diphtheria, 'he had stretched himself in the horrible sickness'. Seeing that Siegmund was dying, his mother 'had cried aloud, which suddenly caused him to struggle with all his soul to spare her her suffering' (Tr 105). In The Trespasser, though, the artist-mother relationship is very sketchy, and the above odd-one-out scene contributes little to elucidate anything of importance about Siegmund's 'deathly' experience as a child. In its Sons and Lovers version the same incident is transformed radically. Unlike Siegmund, Paul is not a 'child' but sixteen years old; nor is his crisis necessarily related to health-related problems. Paul's suffering is psychosomatic rather than coming from pneumonia.

Apparently, their respective mothers play a crucial role in Siegmund's and Paul's recovery. Yet it is only in Sons and Lovers that Lawrence clarifies how the mother can rescue her dying son. Siegmund struggles with all his soul to survive so that he can spare his mother her suffering; he chooses to live so that he will not leave a grieving mother behind. As for Paul, he 'is brought to' only when Mrs Morel 's cry 'Oh, my son, my son!' - the pain in her heart-rending lamentation is almost of biblical proportions - makes him realise that finally she addresses him in the same way she had

addressed William's corpse. This marks a watershed in the Paul-Gertrude relationship; from now on Paul replaces William for his mother.

By the time Mrs Morel's life 'rooted itself' in Paul (SL 171), both son and mother 'knitted together in perfect intimacy'. This, however, does not mean that this relationship would not change in Part II. Differently from his predecessors in The White Peacock and The Trespasser, the artist in Sons and Lovers establishes relationships that evolve and grow constantly. This is apparent particularly in Paul's relation with his mother.

Mrs Morel plays a very positive role in Paul's life in the wake of William's death. Of all the women Paul needs, and who have considerable impact on him, none is able to change, to grow, to understand Paul more than his mother. But Mrs Morel is not always able and willing to support her son. While Paul needs and enjoys her unfailing devotion, he is often frustrated by her attitude towards his artistic aspirations.

7. THE 'DISCIPLES' AND THE 'PHILISTINES' OF PAUL MOREL'S ART

Paul Morel heads for the town like most of Lawrence's early artistic figures. In Sons and Lovers, however, the emphasis is not on the fact that Paul moves to the city rather than on the process of growth this artist undergoes there. The urban world in this book is no longer the idyllic city of lights that so enchants Cyril Beardsall. Paul goes to Nottingham not to remain an outsider but to mix with people.

The impact of the new environment on Paul is obvious from the start. The shy provincial boy would recognise in no time that those who surround him in the factory differ in many ways from the people of his native mining community. No one at Jordan's looks down upon Paul. And for the first time in his life people who are older than him treat him 'entirely as an equal even in age....as if he had been a comrade' (SL 134-5). This 'amiable' reception makes Paul feel at home in the new environment where 'No one was rushed or driven' (SL 140), and all men 'united in labour'. Its 'homely feel' (SL 139-40) is in sharp contrast with the tense atmosphere constantly

present in Paul's family. It is in the factory that Paul finds himself for the first time an equal member of a harmonious 'family'.

Paul is 'quite happy at Jordan's' (SL 148) - in spite of 'the long hours and the confinement' - mainly because of the wonderful relationship he strikes with the factory girls. The sensitive boy is 'not at all embarrassed' to sit in the room 'with the half dozen work-girls' (SL 139). He chatters 'for hours' (SL 136), 'endlessly' (SL 138), telling them 'about his home' (SL 136), and is made in no time the 'recipient' (SL 139) of their woes and dreams.

Paul's close relation with the factory girls has often attracted the attention of critics partly because it contrasts considerably with Lawrence's own relationship with the working girls during the three-month-long apprenticeship in Nottingham. John Worthen argues that Lawrence tells 'quite a different story' in Sons and Lovers because he cleans up experience for a middle-class audience, and because he recreates himself as purely working class Paul.⁴² Whereas Paul Eggert finds Paul Morel's good relation with the factory girls as one of these moments in the novel that lack sharpness because Lawrence is 'less sure of the social environment'.⁴³ The critic disapproves in particular of the descriptive passage in which Lawrence conveys what the girls feel for Paul Morel:

The girls all liked to hear him talk. They often gathered in a little circle, while he sat on a bench, and held forth to them, laughing. Some of them regarded him as a curious little creature, so serious, yet so bright and jolly, and always so delicate in his way with them. They all liked him, and he adored them.
(SL 136)

Eggert argues that the complexity of response of the kind called for by most of the home-like scenes is not solicited here: 'The self-congratulatory tone is only possible because the scene is not located with the same sureness: at home there would soon be somebody pricking Paul's balloon.'⁴⁴

Apparently the tone of the passage is self-congratulatory. Yet this does not necessarily make it, and for that matter Paul's relationship with girls, sound faulty. It is true that the girls at Jordan's do not prick Paul's balloon, but this is apparently what

Lawrence wants to emphasise here. Never before has the sensitive boy been at the centre of other people's attention as the star of the show. Nor has he been praised or considered 'bright' prior to becoming an apprentice. It is there and then that he is initially treated not only as an 'equal' but also as a 'superior'. The work-girls are worried lest he thinks they are not 'good enough' for him (SL 138), or as 'good' as him (SL 311).

Even before Paul has been 'proud within himself, measuring people against himself, and placing them, inexorably' (SL 114). Yet prior to his meeting the factory girls his has been a mute pride. Only when the girls look up to him Paul becomes self-confident and proud as never before, and this has an immediate effect on how he treats others. Shortly after he is employed at Jordan's Paul pays his first visit to the Leivers' and 'scarcely observed' them (SL 174). Like the factory girls, at first the young farmers feel ill at ease in Paul's presence, and are quick to notice that he is their 'superior'. To Miriam, who 'eyed [him] rather wistfully', the 'clever' and knowledgeable Paul is 'a new specimen' (SL 174).

The interest the 'humble' farmers take from the start in Paul's sketches is one of the reasons why he is soon friendly with them. Like the factory girls, the Leivers family are among the first to pay attention to and acknowledge the artist in him:

even from the seaside he wrote long letters to Mrs Leivers, about the shore and the sea. And he brought back his beloved sketches of the flat Lincoln coast, anxious for them to see.....Mrs Leivers, and her children, were almost his disciples. They kindled him, and made him glow to his work. (SL 179)

The open admiration the factory girls (SL 139) and the farmers display for Paul's painting contrasts sharply with Mrs Morel's reticence. Commentators usually take it for granted that Lawrence's conception of Mrs Morel is that of a mother who understands and supports her son in his artistic aspirations. Carol Sklenicka maintains that Gertrude 'had judged Paul's talents correctly when she sent him to grammar school instead of to the pit'.⁴⁵ It is true that when she visits her husband in the hospital in Nottingham Mrs Morel brings back a small tube of paints or some thick paper for Paul (SL 112). Yet this is the only moment in the novel when Lawrence makes a direct

mention of Mrs Morel's interest in Paul's painting. This single moment hardly makes for enough evidence to conclude that Mrs Morel sends Paul to school and buys him paints because she wants to make him a painter. As for the pride she takes in telling 'the folk in the picture shop' about Paul (SL 113), this is more of an atavistic remark from 'Paul Morel' II - 'the mother's heart glowed with pride as she saw her son's budding power'⁴⁶ - rather than an indication of how she feels towards his talent in the final version of the novel.

Mrs Morel has cultural aspirations for Paul, but this does not necessarily mean that she wants him to be an artist. It is no coincidence that Lawrence stresses that Paul 'drew the life warmth, the strength to produce' (SL 190) from his mother, rather than she 'gave' them to him. If Mrs Morel is an inspirer to her artistic son at all, she is a passive inspirer. In no case does the mother encourage Paul to choose painting as a career. On the contrary, she seems rather disturbed by the unfailing interest her son takes in painting from an early age, and immediately after he completes grammar school she urges him to find a job. The high spirits Mrs Morel is in when Paul's third letter of application is answered, and particularly after the successful interview at Jordan's suggest that only now she rests assured that, like William, Paul would have a career in the world of industry.

That she does not encourage Paul to become a painter directly after completing school, however, hardly makes the mother a philistine. Mrs Morel is an educated woman who loves reading and used to visit the Castle gallery often: 'in her life-time she had seen so many pictures' (SL 222). Cultured as she is, though, Mrs Morel is essentially a practical woman. Paul is aware that his mother is 'logical' (SL 178), and has often seen that her logic is that of someone who can be romantic and at the same time is always sober enough to appreciate something for its practical value. This aspect of her character is manifested clearly in the discussion she has with Paul about the mines:

'The world is a wonderful place...and wonderfully beautiful.'

'And so's the pit,' he said. 'Look how it heaps together, like something alive, almost - a big creature that you don't know.'

'Yes,' she said. 'Perhaps!'

'And all the trucks standing waiting, like a string of beasts to be fed,' he said.

'And very thankful I am they *are* standing,' she said, 'for that means they'll turn middling time this week.' (SL 152)

Mrs Morel's interest in money goes beyond that of a housewife who strives to make both ends meet. To her, money is the means that would enable Paul - as well as all her other children - to leave the working class; money not art brings about social upgrading in the first place. Her motto seems to be 'from money to culture', and not the other way round. This is apparently why she chooses to ignore Paul's painting particularly after he is employed at Jordan's. His sketches 'would interest the Leivers more than they interested his mother. It was not his art Mrs Morel cared about, it was himself, and his achievement' (SL 179). Even when Paul wins his first prize awards in the autumn exhibition Mrs Morel hardly displays any emotion, although she is obviously 'full of joy':

'What do you think I've got for my pictures mother?' he asked, coming home one evening. She saw by his eyes he was glad. Her face flushed.

'Now how should I know, my boy!'

'A first prize for those glass jars -'

'Hm!'

'And a first prize for that sketch up at Willey Farm.'

'Both first?'

'Yes.'

'Hm!'

There was a rosy, bright look about her, though she said nothing.

'It's nice,' he said, 'isn't it?'

'It is.'

'Why don't you praise me up to the skies?'

She laughed.

'I should have the trouble of dragging you down again,' she said. (SL 221)

It could be argued that Mrs Morel's indifferent attitude here is that of a woman who is capable of controlling her feelings, of a mother who needs to stop her son becoming stuck-up. Other scenes that follow, however, reveal that her indifference is indicative of her intention not to let Paul think that she approves of his unflagging devotion to painting. She goes to the Castle several times during the exhibition, and feels 'a proud

woman' because of the two prizes. Yet she makes sure that her visits there are 'unknown to Paul' (SL 222). She is hardly prepared to allow him to be an artist by profession. '[D]oing counted with her' (SL 261), and by 'doing' she meant something that brings money. Except for Hester - the greedy mother in 'The Rocking-Horse Winner' - Mrs Morel is perhaps the most 'materialistic' figure in Lawrence's *oeuvre*. Asked by Miriam what he would do with the cloth he had beautifully stencilled with a design on roses, Paul replies: 'Send it to Liberty's. I did it for my mother - but I think she'd rather have the money' (SL 241). To express her open approval of Paul's work Mrs Morel must see a price tag attached to it, as is the case at the outset of Chapter X:

Suddenly he heard a wild noise from his mother. Rushing into the kitchen he found her standing on the hearth-rug wildly waving a letter and crying 'Hurray!' as if she had gone mad. He was shocked and frightened.

'Why mother!' he exclaimed.

She flew to him, flung her arms round him for a moment, then waved the letter crying:

'Hurray, my boy - I knew we should do it!'

He was afraid of her, the small, severe woman with greying hair suddenly bursting out in such frenzy. The postman came running back, afraid something had happened...Mrs Morel rushed to the door.

'His picture's got first prize, Fred,' she cried, 'and is sold for twenty guineas.'

My word, that's somethink like!' said the young postman, whom they had known all his life.

'And Major Moreton has bought it,' she cried.

'It looks like meanin' somethink, that does, Mrs Morel,' said the postman, his blue eyes bright. He was glad to have brought such a lucky letter. Mrs Morel went indoors and sat down, trembling. Paul was afraid lest she might have mis-read the letter, and might be disappointed after all. He scrutinised it, once, twice. Yes, he became convinced it was true. Then he sat down, his heart beating with joy.

'Mother!' he exclaimed.

'Didn't I say we should do it?' she said, pretending she was not crying.

He took the kettle off the fire and mashed the tea.

'You didn't think, mother-' he began, tentatively.

'No my son - not so much - but I expected a good deal.'

'But not so much,' he said.

'No - no - but I knew we should do it.' (SL 295-6)

Paul's 'deflating' remarks show that he has always been aware of her tendency to check rather than to encourage him to become a painter. It is true that after William's death, she grows confident that Paul would achieve something, that he would be even

more successful than William. Yet her 'great belief' in Paul related neither to his painting nor to anything in particular. She simply believes that Paul 'was going to distinguish himself' (SL 222), that 'he was going to make a man whom nothing should shift off his feet, he was going to alter the face of the earth, in some way which mattered' (SL 261). Moreover, after the first 'proof' of Paul's financial success as a painter Mrs Morel is quick to curb her enthusiasm. Never again will she feel so elated in Paul's presence about his artistic achievement. At twenty-four, Paul says 'his first confident thing' to her, and this is about his confidence in his artistic potential: 'I s'll make a painter that they'll attend to' (SL 345). But his confidence is hardly matched by Mrs Morel's reaction. Although he is 'gradually making it possible to earn a livelihood by his art' (SL 345), it is obvious that what he earned would hardly improve his social status; not to the extent that Mrs Morel wants at least. Paul is not 'a successful commercial artist',⁴⁷ and by the end of the book his optimism that he will do well financially is dented considerably; he knows he will be 'on the rocks' before he is 'very much older' (SL 452).

The prospect of having a rather bleak financial future, however, hardly daunts Paul's commitment to art. Paul is the first of Lawrence's major artistic figures whose life is not dictated by money. To the end of her life Mrs Morel is unable to understand, or perhaps unwilling to accept, that Paul's main concern is not to climb the rungs of the social ladder but to devote himself to art. Her reluctance to approve of his artistic career affects the Mrs Morel-Paul relationship more than anything else; probably even more than his attachment for Miriam.

8. THE COHESIVE WORK

The composition of Sons and Lovers is one of the issues commentators have often felt uncomfortable about. From the start most reviewers expressed themselves in favour of the first half of the book. Part I has been praised for the author's 'resolute reliance upon cumulative detail',⁴⁸ for its 'exquisite nature-pieces',⁴⁹ and in particular for the pages

that have to do with early Morel history.⁵⁰ Recently Part I has been praised for its art that thrives 'on dramatic complexity and abundance',⁵¹ and for providing 'abundant examples of this essential Lawrencean quality: experience re-created with an emotional participation so full as to seem simply to yield the object itself'.⁵²

Occasionally the second half too has been praised for its 'sincerity' and 'long crescendo of realism',⁵³ as well as for revealing 'the remarkable power' of the author.⁵⁴ In most cases, however, Part II has not been rated as good as its first counterpart. The degree to which critics and writers alike object to the second half varies from partial disapproval, to outright rejection and fierce denunciation.⁵⁵ From the first Part II was criticised for the freedom with which Lawrence depicted sensitive moral questions. Commentators have often found fault with this part for its lack of 'reticence',⁵⁶ for some of its rather 'photographically' described incidents,⁵⁷ as well as for 'the incessant scenes of sexual passion...the morbid brooding on the flesh, this...ever-hot and heavy lustfulness of Paul Morel'.⁵⁸ Of late a critic has remarked that in Part II 'the contrast with the less claustrophobic art of Part One is disagreeably obvious. But that is because Lawrence is not yet sure of what he is doing, which way his art is going'.⁵⁹

More than eighty years after its initial publication it is difficult to trace a critic who approves of both halves of Sons and Lovers. The two parts of the book are not considered as integral components of an organic whole. From the start the work was criticised for its lack of 'coherence'. Heinemann refused 'Paul Morel' III mainly because 'it lacks unity'.⁶⁰ According to the publisher's resident reader Walter de la Mare, the work 'was badly put together',⁶¹ and as such needed 'pulling together: it is not of a piece'.⁶²

Lawrence was hardly taken by surprise by such objections to the work because he had anticipated in advance how critics would react to it. Only one day after he had sent the manuscript of 'Paul Morel' III off to Heinemann, Lawrence would 'warn' de la Mare: 'It may seem loose - and I may cut the childhood part - if you think better so - and perhaps you'll want me to spoil some of the good stuff. But it is rather great.'⁶³

In spite of the understanding and support Edward Garnett offered Lawrence with regard to this book, this experienced editor too was somehow unable to see it as a cohesive work. 'It is rather a good novel,' Lawrence wrote to him shortly before the publication of Sons and Lovers:

- but if anything a bit difficult to grasp as a whole, at first. Yet it *is* a unified whole, and I hate the dodge of putting a thick black line round figures to throw out the composition - Which shows I'm a bit uneasy about it.⁶⁴

Apparently Lawrence was unhappy with Garnett's cutting of the novel partly because it would affect the very cohesion of the work. 'I sit in sadness and grief after your letter,' Lawrence told the editor after receiving the disappointing news of the extent to which he intended to prune the book:

I daren't say anything. All right, take out what you think necessary - I suppose I shall see what you've done when the proofs come, at any rate....Tell me anything considerable you are removing - (sounds like furniture).⁶⁵

This is not to say that Lawrence was completely reluctant to accept any cutting imposed by Garnett because in some cases he did find the editor's advice helpful when recasting the novel for the last time. No matter how willing he was to accept Garnett's pruning or to follow his suggestions, Lawrence insisted on, and finally succeeded in keeping Sons and Lovers to his original 'idea and feeling'.⁶⁶ The last version of the book differs considerably from the previous ones. Yet all the work's four drafts have in common a two-part composition.

As the surviving chapter plan of 'Paul Morel' I shows, Lawrence intended from the first to devote a part to each of the two stages of the artist's life: childhood and youth. In Part I of every draft Lawrence highlighted, although not to the same extent in each of them, the tensions - maternal, familial, social - the artist goes through in his early years. The full picture of Paul's childhood, though, emerges only in the final version of the book.

In the first half of Sons and Lovers Lawrence does not depict simply a tense childhood as such. Lawrence pays special attention to Paul's early frustrations to trace in them the roots of this would-be artist. Paul's tense childhood becomes the seed-bed

of his multi-dimensional 'hypersensitiveness' as an artist. Part I of Sons and Lovers is an indispensable preamble to Part II. Had Lawrence not written the first half, much of Paul's behaviour, interests, tensions, failures and achievements as an adult would have sounded somehow enigmatic.

If Lawrence felt at times like altering Part I more than its sequel this was mainly because he had never previously attempted to write something like Paul's childhood. The enormous attention he pays for four years to the early life of this artistic figure also makes Paul the most memorable child of Lawrence's *oeuvre*.

Likewise, if publishers and editors were uneasy about Sons and Lovers, its first part in particular, that was partly because they had hardly seen anything like it before. Dickensian literary children, especially David Copperfield, were brilliant illustrations in prose of Wordsworth's poetic axiom that the child is father to the man. Neither Wordsworth, nor Dickens, however, paid attention to childhood to trace in it the gestation of an artist's soul. Lawrence was a pioneer - concurrently with Joyce - in depicting the early life of an artistic character at such great length, and so it was inevitable that at first those who read Part I of Sons and Lovers would either miss or tend to misinterpret considerably Lawrence's novel handling of the stage of childhood. As Helen and Carl Baron put it:

no counter-argument that Lawrence was creating a new tradition - that future generations of readers would accept Lawrence's different concept of how parts of a novel relate to the whole - could have prevailed over Garnett's acquired knowledge of what the present market would support.⁶⁷

Garnett's attitude towards the second half of the novel was somehow less dismissive; he refashioned it less than Part I. The editor's handling of Part II, a critic has suggested recently, shows that '[p]robably he did not feel confident that he fully comprehended its direction'.⁶⁸ Probably, yes. But Garnett's different treatment of the second part may also indicate that he did feel more comfortable with it. Garnett had already been acquainted with that kind of material in Lawrence's previous work, particularly in The Trespasser, by the time he had access to 'Paul Morel'.

Even for Lawrence, the writing of the second half of Sons and Lovers was not much of a challenge. Apart from the death of Mrs Morel, which he added and recast definitely only in the ultimate draft of the book, almost every other crucial moment of Paul's adult life is traceable in the early versions. In particular, Lawrence was on familiar grounds when writing about Paul's relationship with women. Even by the time he began 'Paul Morel' I Lawrence had already written considerably about artists' relationship with women. The challenge for Lawrence in Part II of Sons and Lovers was not so much the subject-matter as his new conception of the artistic Paul's relation with two stereotypes of women: the spiritual Miriam and the sexual Clara.

9. MIRIAM: THE ARTIST'S SPIRITUAL STIMULUS AND THE 'SPIRITUAL VAMPIRE'

9.1 Miriam Leivers: Literary Predecessors and Successors

Like most characters in Sons and Lovers the Miriam figure has her literary predecessors in D. H. Lawrence. Her earliest forerunner - Emily Worthington (Saxton) - appears in 'Laetitia' in 1906, the second - Maggie Pearson - in A Collier's Friday Night in 1909, the third - Muriel - in 'The Virtuous' (revised as 'A Modern Lover') in January 1910, the fourth - a second Muriel - in 'A Blot' (later 'The Fly in the Ointment') in April 1910, and the fifth - Helena Verden - in 'The Saga of Siegmund' in August 1910.

The general belief so far has been that Miriam emerges for the first time in Lawrence's third novel in 'Paul Morel' II. The surviving 'Plot' of 'Paul Morel' I, however, reveals that it is in this version that this character makes its first appearance, although as yet it is not called 'Miriam'. Moreover, at this early stage the features of the Miriam of Sons and Lovers are traceable in more than one female figure. One such character which Lawrence seems to have intended as an early Miriam is Floss/ie.⁶⁹ Apparently, Lawrence was undecided what to call this figure. In two cases her name is preceded by the angle bracketed <Je> and <J>, which seem to stand for the name of

Jessie Chambers, who served as the main model not only for Miriam in Sons and Lovers but also for most other Miriam figures. Like Miriam Leivers, Flossie goes to college, and seems interested in the paintings of Fred/Wm, as Paul Morel is called in this draft. Another female character in the 'Plot' who seems to have paved the way for the emergence of Miriam is Newcombe/Newcome. In Part I the Paul Morel figure visits frequently the family she lives with, and in the second half she is 'very jealous' of him. But the character in 'Paul Morel' I who is most akin to the Miriam of the late drafts is Mabel.⁷⁰ She walks with the artist when he is young, is interested in his art, becomes 'jealous', and is neglected by him.

In 'Paul Morel' II Lawrence would no longer make mention of Flossie, Newcome and Mabel. By now the number of girls 'competing' for Paul Morel is reduced to two, and their names - Miriam and Clara - are recorded for the first time. The Miriam figure would constantly change and grow in importance in the last three drafts of Sons and Lovers. But not only in them. Throughout the years he was engaged in writing the third novel, Lawrence was busy with other 'Miriam' figures. In December 1911 he began 'The Harassed Angel' (later 'The Shades of Spring') whose heroine - Hilda Millership - shares with the artist John Syson more or less the same kind of experience that Miriam Leivers has with Paul Morel. Likewise, the Miriam figure appears frequently as the main persona in several poems composed prior to and particularly during the years the four drafts of 'Paul Morel' were being written. The 1910 poems 'Ah, Muriel' and 'Last Words to Muriel' (later entitled 'Last Words to Miriam') offer a poetic version of the tensions narrated in Sons and Lovers.

Lawrence's interest in the Miriam figure did not ebb away with the completion of Sons and Lovers in 1913. In a sense she remained an ever present character in what Lawrence would write thereafter. The most memorable Miriam figure after Miriam Leivers is Hermione Roddice in Women in Love. The Miriam character was so much in Lawrence's mind that he would 'resurrect' her even in his last novel Lady Chatterley's Lover in Mellor's account of his youth.

In this gallery of Miriam figures, however, Miriam Leivers has a special place. She not only is the best known of the Miriam characters but also is one of Lawrence's most memorable female figures. Miriam Leivers is the epitome of the Lawrentian dreaming woman.

9.2 Assessing Miriam Leivers's Status as the Artist's Intellectual/Cultural Companion

Miriam is the woman who appeals most to Paul the artist, yet whether she is his ideal intellectual/cultural companion is debatable. Miriam's attachment to Paul hardly displays something like Jessie Chambers's devotion to the development of Lawrence's 'genius'.⁷¹ It has been suggested that Edward Garnett's pruning of the novel diluted further the intellectual disposition of the Paul-Miriam relationship.⁷² The editor cut, for instance, a four-page account of Paul meeting Miriam at the library in Chapter VII. Even here, however, Miriam hardly emerges as someone who is eager to meet Paul the artist. Nor does she go to the library to discuss with Paul literature. She visits the place simply to be with him: 'Books did not matter to her' (SL 192).

Occasionally, however, it is emphasised that their literary discussions bring Paul and Miriam together more than anything else:⁷³ 'Mrs Morel had said that his and Miriam's affair was like a fire fed on books - if there were no more volumes it would die out' (SL 360). Probably, yes. But although talking books is said to be 'their unfailing topic' (SL 360), the novel records none of their literary debates. Even when Paul and Miriam actually discuss books, the talking is done only by him. While Paul holds forth 'passionately' (SL 193), Miriam always listens in silence in spite of the narrator's remark that talking about books was 'her unfailing topic' (SL 229). No matter how much Paul insists on her approving the books he borrows from the library (SL 192) she never voices any opinion.

The discrepancy between the claim that Miriam enjoys talking about books, and her failure to do so is not the only inconsistency in her alleged status as a cultural companion of an artistic lover. We read often in the novel that Paul shows Miriam anything he paints or designs: 'A sketch finished, he always wanted to take it to

Miriam' (SL 190) because he 'could not keep from her anything he did' (SL 240). Paul tells his mother that one reason why he 'likes' Miriam is that he talks to her about paintings. He also claims that, unlike Mrs Morel, Miriam cares 'whether a picture's decorative or not' or 'what *manner* it is in' (SL 251). Paul's words contrast sharply with the early statement that Miriam 'did not care for conventional studies' (SL 240), and with her lack of enthusiasm about his art. In one of his letters to her Paul emphasises that he is much obliged to her 'for your sympathy with my painting and drawing....I do look forward to your criticisms, which, to my shame and glory, are always grand appreciations' (SL 294). The novel, however, offers no evidence that Miriam is able to be articulate about Paul's art. All she can do is to bend, peer, and ponder (SL 182) over his sketches.

It could be argued that the inconsistencies in the Paul-Miriam literary/intellectual relationship reflect to some extent Lawrence's temptation to transplant into it something of the kind of relation he had been enjoying with Jessie throughout his early years. At a rather early stage in the writing of the novel, however, Lawrence began to minimise gradually Miriam's status as an intellectual/artistic woman. So, for instance, if in the early versions of the book Miriam appears as a music teacher almost half way through, in the ultimate draft she hopes '[to] be kept as a teacher' (SL 459) in the farming college only in the concluding chapter.⁷⁴ Likewise, in the final version Lawrence made some deletions which rendered her literary friendship with Paul less conspicuous. In the chapter 'Strife in Love', for example, Lawrence dropped 'together' after 'they [Paul and Miriam] read Balzac' (SL 234).⁷⁵

Such alterations and deletions suggest that Lawrence was gradually clarifying the role Miriam would perform in Paul's life. While she remains important to Paul in every version of the book, it is only in the ultimate draft that Lawrence finally clarifies that it is as a spiritual rather than as an ineffectual/cultural companion that Miriam appeals most to her artistic lover.

9.3 Miriam: the Artist's Spiritual Companion

As a spiritual figure, Miriam follows in Helena Verden's steps. In Miriam's case, however, spirituality becomes not one of the dominant but the only important facet of her character. Miriam is Lawrence's first one-sided figure. Her name - significantly a synonym of Mary - has long become a symbol for 'spirit' and 'soul'. Lawrence focuses on Miriam's spiritual nature from the moment she makes her first appearance in Chapter VI. Everything about her points to this essential aspect of her character. At first her spirituality is evident in what she chooses to read. Being 'romantic in her soul' (SL 173) Miriam prefers especially the works of Walter Scott. To her, a Scott heroine or hero is 'everywhere': 'and Ediths and Lucys and Rowenas, Brian de Bois Guilberts, Rob Roys and Guy Mannerings rustled the sunny leaves in the morning' (SL 173). Miriam feels a strong affinity especially to the heroine of 'The Lady of the Lake', imagining herself 'a grand person' (SL 157) like her.

Miriam's spirituality is seen clearly particularly in her stance towards religion. To her, 'Christ and God made one great figure, which she loved tremblingly and passionately' (SL 173). Many characters in Sons and Lovers and in Lawrence's other works attend church, but none more devotedly than Miriam. She does not live till she enters church (SL 202). Only then and there her soul comes into a glow and expands into prayer (SL 203).

Much of Miriam's religiosity comes from her religious mother, her 'great companion' (SL 173). Mrs Leivers influences considerably Miriam's attitude to religion from an early age. The mother tries to instil the doctrine of 'the other cheek' into all her children, but it is only with Miriam - 'the child of her heart' (SL 178) - that she succeeds. Mrs Leivers and Miriam are both 'inclined to be mystical, such women as treasure religion inside them, breathe it in their nostrils, and see the whole of life in a mist thereof' (SL 173).

As a small boy Paul is not the child of his mother's heart. Yet Mrs Morel's religious impact on him is not less strong than that of Mrs Leivers on Miriam. Mrs Morel inherits from generations of Puritans a high moral sense, which in the wake of her

unsuccessful marriage becomes 'a religious instinct'. If her husband 'sinned, she tortured him. If he drank, and lied, was often a poltroon, sometimes a knave, she wielded the lash unmercifully' (SL 25).

Always eager to attract his mother's attention and to please her as a child, it is no wonder that Paul's early religious attitude reflects much of her 'moral sense'. Mrs Morel's fierce morality as well as her treatment of the drunken husband explain largely why in his early years Paul 'was afraid of the things he mustn't do' (SL 203):

Paul never forgot, after one of these fierce internecine fights, seeing a big red moon lift itself up, slowly, between the waste road over the hill-top; steadily, like a bird. And he thought of the bible, that the moon should be turned to blood. And the next day he made haste to be friends with Billy Pillins. (SL 101)

This passage sheds some light also on the great impact religion and the Scriptures had on stimulating the imagination of the artist in his early childhood. 'When I was a boy,' Paul would recollect many years later:

'I always thought a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night was a pit, with its steam, and its lights and the burning bank - and I thought the Lord was always at the pit-top.' (SL 364)

Although Mrs Morel plays a major role in Paul's religious upbringing, she is not his spiritual companion. In spite of an early remark that Mrs Morel is 'deeply religious' (SL 17), she is more of a moralist than a spiritualist. 'Think,' the parson tells her in her dying moments, 'you will have your mother and father and your sisters, and your son, in the Other Land' (SL 431). But Mrs Morel does not look forward to join her dead people in the after-life. All she wants is to live: 'I have done without them for a long time, and *can* do without them now. It is the living I want, not the dead' (SL 431-2).

Paul finds his spiritual match only in Miriam. They are equally 'sensitive to the feel' of places of worship (SL 203). Their souls 'expanded into prayer' beside each other. At such moments, 'All his latent mysticism quivered into life. She was drawn to him. He was a prayer along with her'.

It is in Sons and Lovers that Lawrence highlights for the first time in his *oeuvre* how important religion is to a creative man. Miriam's interest in the spiritual stimulates

the spiritual Paul, bringing forth to him his imagination (SL 241), offering him the insight, the vision necessary for any artist to comprehend and appreciate what he creates unconsciously (SL 190). Paul seeks Miriam 'because of the intensity to which she roused him' (SL 189). In contact with her 'he gained insight, his vision went deeper' (SL 190). If from his mother 'he drew the life warmth, the strength to produce; Miriam urged this warmth into intensity like a white light'.

The impact religious Miriam has on Paul marks a major breakthrough in Lawrence's handling of the artist-woman relationship. If in The Trespasser Siegmund cannot go beyond some pathetic love-declarations - for him, Helena is 'everything' (Tr 140), the 'key of the castle' (Tr 71) - to explain why he is so enchanted with a dreaming woman, in the third novel Lawrence highlights what a 'dreaming woman' can offer to the artist. It is in Sons and Lovers that Lawrence could finally clarify his image of a spiritual woman, and why she is so indispensable for an artist.

9.4 The Artist and the 'Spiritual Witch'

It is ironical that while Miriam's spirituality brings her and Paul so close together, it also serves as the main reason for their break-up. No matter how helpful Paul finds the romantic and religious side of Miriam in his creative work, he becomes increasingly uneasy about her excessive spirituality. Always 'sad' (SL 183), Miriam seems 'as in some dreamy tale, a maiden in bondage, her spirit dreaming in a land far away and magical' (SL 176). Her soul is involved in whatever she does. This 'anthropomorphic' woman (SL 179) needs 'things kindling in her imagination or in her soul, before she felt she had them'. Whether she contemplates a flower, or tries to learn algebra her soul is always 'quivering' (SL 196), 'intensely supplicating' everything (SL 188). Miriam tries to find 'God's burning bush' (SL 183) in everything in life. Her 'religious intensity' (SL 179) makes her an odd-one-out among siblings and friends. This 'deeply' religious woman looks 'so lost and out of place among people' (SL 458) to the end of the book.

Paul's questioning 'the orthodox creed' (SL 230) at twenty-one is closely linked with Miriam's religiosity. To Paul, Miriam's 'religious intensity, which made the world for her either a nunnery garden, or a Paradise where sin and knowledge were not, or else an ugly, cruel thing' (SL 179) represents a warped Christianity. Partly because of what Mrs Leivers tells her, Miriam grows up believing that sex is 'one thing in marriage that is always dreadful, but you have to bear it' (SL 334). Miriam is opposed to sex more than any other early Lawrentian heroine. She simply 'could not cope with it' (SL 462). What she loves in Paul is 'his soul', and 'only when man came up in him was there war between them' (SL 263). Miriam loves Paul as if she were Mary of Bethany (SL 263), who, as Lawrence put it in a later work, epitomises the 'spiritual marriage, bodiless' of the female who is unable to become 'a living, physical woman'.⁷⁶

Although Lawrence makes Miriam's asexual attitude clear throughout the book, some critics, mainly feminists, hold that Miriam is sexually normal. To Laurence Lerner, 'the clearest interpretation' of the story is that Miriam 'is not morbidly spiritual but an intense and perfectly normal young woman who is in love with Paul'.⁷⁷ Whereas Adrienne Gavin claims: 'If there is a consistent physical reluctance shown in the novel, it is shown by Paul, and, in the end, the relationship fails for a timeworn reason; Paul does not love Miriam as she loves him.'⁷⁸

To prove that Miriam is completely normal, feminists make much particularly of her decision to undergo the sexual test. Although Miriam agrees to make love to Paul without societal qualms - 'One of her great charms for the youth, was that she was not held by conventions' (SL 192); 'She was not afraid of people, what they might say' (SL 328) - her sexual initiation is a step she takes not because she wants it, but because she has no choice. She is aware that unless she succumbs to Paul's sexual demand, all chances are that he would leave her; something which Miriam will not allow to happen because it is only through Paul that she can experience the 'holy' communion with nature (SL 195), and anything she cares passionately about.

Lawrence's handling of Miriam's possessive nature reveals clearly much of his biased attitude towards this character, and of his early misogynistic views. Very often

it is implied that there is something of a 'snake' in Miriam's attitude towards Paul; not so much the temptress rather than a creature who wants to be fully aware of what her 'prey' is up to. She displays her 'blood-hound quality' (SL 370) to learn everything about Paul. She spies on him whenever and wherever she can. Like a skilful detective she investigates his relationships with Mrs Morel, the factory girls and Clara. She must go through the books he reads, the sketches he makes, and the correspondence he receives. There is nothing about Paul that Miriam does not consider worth knowing, even if it means she has to eavesdrop (SL 208).

In spite of such efforts, Miriam often fails to know much about Paul, and in some cases she comes to the wrong conclusions about his needs. Seeing how hesitant he remains for so long to make a pass at her, she seems to believe that, after all, his sexual need does not represent what is essential about him: 'She believed that there were in him desires for higher things, and desires for lower, and that the desire for the higher would conquer' (SL 269). Even when she finally tells Paul 'through her shut teeth', 'You *shall* have me' (SL 327), Miriam is still confident that the 'Disciple' in him is stronger than the man: 'She believed the former, and by the former she held him' (SL 263).

Paul feels far from happy as a result of the erotic experience with Miriam, but this does not vindicate her expectations. He had already noticed during their passionate moments that 'she had not been with him all the time, that her soul had stood apart, in a sort of horror' (SL 330), and the sexual test convinced him finally that Miriam can never be both a spiritual and sexual lover.

Paul comes to see in due time in Miriam what Cyril only suspects in Emily, and Siegmund has difficulty to notice in Helena. Miriam is perhaps the best epitome of what Lawrence would later deplore as 'spiritual vampires'.⁷⁹ In The Trespasser Hampson draws Siegmund's attention to such creatures of will and intellect who suppress 'the gross and animal' in artists (Tr 112). Paul Morel, however, hardly needs a preacher to make him aware of the dangers a 'spiritual' woman like Miriam poses to him, although the importance of Mrs Morel's early premonition that Miriam 'is one of

those who will want to suck a man's soul out till he has none of his own left' (SL 196) should not be underestimated.

If Paul displays more awareness than Cyril and Siegmund of the risks coming from a 'dreaming' woman, this is because Paul is in a much more favourable position. Helena Verden, for instance, is not made such a spiritual figure as Miriam. Moreover, Helena is not opposed to sex to the extent that Miriam is. In Sons and Lovers Lawrence erases any trace of healthy sexuality in Paul's lover, thus making his task much easier to see that a woman like Miriam who 'wheedle[s] the soul out of things' (SL 257) and '[w]ants the soul out of my body' (SL 321) endangers his very existence as an artist.⁸⁰ By deprecating Paul's sexuality Miriam is in fact attempting to nip in the bud the vitality which makes his artistic creativity possible.

The failure of the sexual initiation predetermines the end of the Paul-Miriam relationship. Paul's quest for sexual fulfilment intensifies considerably in the wake of the attempted erotic experience with Miriam. Yet this hardly implies, as one critic suggests, that in Sons and Lovers Lawrence repudiates the mental life as an 'obstacle to self-fulfilment'.⁸¹ Paul's overt sexual interest in Clara does not mean that by now the artist comes to see his passionate nature as being more important than his spirituality. Paul's friendship with Clara represents yet another stage in the artist's quest for self-fulfilment. In leaving Miriam, Paul does not opt for passion at the expense of spirit. Paul leaves Miriam because she is asexual and over-spiritual at the same time.

Paul's decision to leave Miriam, however, does not mean that he negates the inestimable formative role she has been playing for years in his early artistic life. If Paul seems to ignore Miriam to the point of complete forgetfulness this is because Lawrence devotes the second half of Part II mainly to the artist's relation with a woman who also is a stereotype but of another nature. With Clara's introduction as Paul's mainly sexual partner Sons and Lovers is well on the way to become a thesis novel.

10. CLARA AND THE ARTIST'S 'BAPTISM OF LIFE'

Unlike Miriam, Clara is more or less without distinct literary predecessors in D. H. Lawrence. Some of her features are traceable in Helena in The Trespasser, yet as a Lawrentian prototype she emerges for the first time in Sons and Lovers. It is generally believed that initially the Clara figure emerges in 'Paul Morel' II.⁸² The surviving 'Plot' of 'Paul Morel' I, however, reveals that, like most of the book's principal characters, Clara makes her debut in this draft. In spite of the angle bracketed <Je> and <J> preceding Flossie, she seems to have more in common with Clara than with Miriam. In Chapter VII Mabel is made jealous, and Flossie is apparently the main 'culprit'.⁸³ In the second half of the 'Plot' Flossie becomes a much more important character. Her friendship with Wm/Fred (the Paul figure of this version) becomes stronger. In Chapter II he 'meets Flossie much', and this seems to be one of the reasons why he also 'neglects Mabel'. Wm's attention to Flossie is 'renewed' in Chapter IV presumably after a cooling-down period. In this chapter their friendship is described as 'great' particularly 'after painting in Castle'. This suggests that Wm and Flossie enjoy walking to the Castle much in the same way as Paul and Clara in the drafts following the 'Plot'.

Although the Wm-Flossie friendship apparently displays some elements of the Paul-Clara relation, the fact that except for the initial chapter plan nothing else has survived from 'Paul Morel' I makes it impossible to say if at this stage Flossie displays other traits of the Clara of the later version. The earliest evidence how Lawrence treats Clara in a manuscript comes from the surviving fragments of 'Paul Morel' II, although even by now the character is not christened Clara but Frances Radford. In this draft Frances appears for the first time in Chapter IX. By then Mr Morel has killed his son Arthur accidentally. In the wake of this tragic event Paul falls ill with pneumonia, recovers, and finally expresses his confidence that he would be 'great'. The interest Mrs Morel begins to show in Paul as well as his talking reassuringly about his potential to distinguish himself reveal, as John Worthen puts it, that by now the novel is in danger of turning into 'romance'.⁸⁴ Worthen also suggests that to 'revitalise' the novel,⁸⁵ which

'is starting to fall to pieces' Lawrence begins a new chapter, originally called 'Passion', about Paul's relationship with Frances.

The view that Lawrence invented the Clara figure initially to rescue the book was first expressed by Jessie Chambers, who held that:

her creation arose as a complement to Lawrence's mood of failure and defeat. The events related had no foundation in fact, whatever their psychological significance. Having utterly failed to come to grips with his problem in real life, he created the imaginary Clara as a compensation.⁸⁶

Had Clara been initially introduced for the reasons provided by Jessie, one would expect that, like most principal figures, this character would have undergone considerable changes in the third and the fourth versions of the book. Lawrence's conception of the Frances figure, however, constitutes very much the backbone of the novel's final Clara. If Clara was invented in the first place simply to rescue the book, then how can we account for the fact that the 'Passion' chapter of 'Paul Morel' II is the only part from this early draft to survive in the ultimate version of Sons and Lovers. Apparently, Clara's appearance at this critical stage was hardly accidental. Rather than simply to revitalise and rescue the book, Clara has a function of her own to play. She is part of Lawrence's initial 'idea and feeling' of the novel⁸⁷ as much as Miriam. Clara was meant from the first as a woman who would play a strictly well-defined role in the artist's life.

From the start Clara is described as a woman with 'a defiant carriage' (SL 222). Never before had Paul come across a woman like her who dares to challenge everything he says. She is the first woman in Paul's life to ridicule his self-confidence (SL 273), and flippancy (SL 274), call him 'despicable' (SL 290), and advise him that he 'should learn manners' (SL 308) and 'respect for another person's feelings' (SL 314).

Clara's 'insolent indifference' (SL 307), her unfailing courage to defy, 'scorn' (SL 270), and 'be nasty' (SL 308) with him makes Paul feel so 'uncomfortable' (SL 274) that he cannot help being 'furious' (SL 273), 'very angry, and very rude' (SL 307) with this '[r]otten swank' most of the time they are together. 'She maddened him' (SL 306) as no one else in his life.

If her spirit of defiance makes Paul hate Clara in the first place, however, it also serves him as a powerful incentive for the great interest he takes in her from the start: 'There was something in Clara that Paul disliked, and much that piqued him' (SL 305-6). He is so eager to discuss with her a variety of topics not because he considers her as an intellectual woman; Clara is not a wit. Nor does he contradict her so often to prove that he is always right and she is wrong. Paul chooses to take sides against Clara (SL 273), no matter if what she says makes sense or not, because he is fascinated by the passion with which she always expresses and defends her views. He 'tease[s]' (SL 290) her in order to draw out the kind of vitality he has never seen before in any other woman, least of all in Miriam. Paul detects in her stubbornness as an interlocutor and in her tendency to forget herself in the game of hay-jumping (SL 290) the passionate woman he as artist has been searching for for so long.

In spite of what she says against men in general, Paul is quick to conclude that Clara is not 'a man-hater' (SL 271). He finds her 'extraordinarily provocative' (SL 307) from the first meeting. When they shake hands, 'she lifted her arm straight in a manner that seemed at once to keep him at a distance, and yet to fling something to him' (SL 269-70).

Everything about Clara indicates that she is primarily a sexual being. The great attention Lawrence pays to her beauty makes Clara one of his most 'luxuriant' (SL 365) and 'desirable' (SL 383) female figures. Lawrence highlights her physical attractions perhaps not less than in the case of his most 'erotic' heroine Constance Chatterley. Clara is a paragon of female beauty. She comes alive because Lawrence pays constant attention to every single feature of her physique. Everything about Clara is beautiful, enticing, almost close to perfection. The first remark about this figure is related to her hair. Clara is 'blonde' (SL 222). She is always fastidious (SL 375) about her 'fine' (SL 269), 'heavy, dun-coloured' hair, which she coils on top of her head. Apparently, Lawrence chooses this particular colour for Clara to provide her with a halo. If Clara is a sexual woman at heart, her eroticism is not base but 'holy'.

The unhappy years of marriage have made her shining eyes (SL 400) and full mouth (SL 223) so 'scornful', yet they have hardly undermined her 'purity'. Almost everything in Clara is white: her neck (SL 269), skin (SL 223), hand (SL 316), breast (SL 401), body (SL 402). She has 'bright' shoulders (SL 402), and 'gleaming' arms (SL 302). At thirty Clara is a 'magnificent' (SL 302), and 'luxuriant' (SL 365) woman. Her neck (SL 279), hands (SL 243), back (SL 382), and figure (SL 350) are 'beautiful'; her shoulders (SL 222), and body (SL 277) are 'handsome'; her throat (SL 306), arm (SL 336), chest (SL 375), and upright body (SL 375) are 'strong'; her flesh is 'sensitive' (SL 376), her arms are 'creamy' (SL 302); and her long well-kept hands that match her large limbs are 'powerful looking' (SL 316).

By the time he was writing about Clara, Lawrence had already paid considerable attention to the beauty of other female characters. Emily and Lettie in The White Peacock, and Helena in The Trespasser are often described as pretty women. In spite of her excessive spirituality, Miriam too is portrayed as 'beautiful' (SL 333), and 'very handsome' (SL 207). Unlike Clara's, though, Miriam's beauty does not last for long. After the sexual test her arms are described as 'pitiful' and 'resigned' (SL 339), and the nape of her neck as 'humble' (SL 457). At twenty-four, Miriam seemed 'old' to Paul, 'older than Clara. Her bloom of youth had quickly gone. A sort of stiffness, almost of woodenness had come upon her' (SL 460). In spite of her age, Clara remains to the end as 'luxuriant' as ever.

The attention Lawrence pays to Clara's physical beauty has elicited much controversy. From the first it was remarked that Lawrence 'strips everything naked', his people are 'animals' who live 'by sense and sense alone'.⁸⁸ The 'morbid brooding on the flesh' was found revolting and repulsive.⁸⁹

Apparently, those early moralists were shocked by the frequent references in the book to the exposed parts of Clara's body. Her throat (SL 302), neck (SL 375), shoulders (SL 378), arms (SL 302), and breasts (SL 375) are frequently described as 'bare' and 'naked'. Clara's breast and bosom are constantly swelling (SL 270), swinging (SL 279), shaking (SL 290), rocking (SL 352), tilting (SL 353), or swaying (SL 402).

Paul knows 'her curves of her breast and shoulders as if they had been moulded inside him' (SL 319): 'Her breasts were heavy. He held one in each hand, like big fruits in their cups, and kissed them, fearfully' (SL 383).

Uncomfortable with this 'erotic' vocabulary, Edward Garnett tried to prune it as much as possible. He cut, for instance, six sentences from the most explicit scenes in Chapter XII, and one and a half from the description of Clara preparing to swim in Chapter XIII. These scenes were censored further when Garnett checked the proofs.⁹⁰ Likewise, the editor censored single words: he altered 'hips' to 'body' (SL 333), and 'thighs' to 'limbs' (SL 375), and deleted the word 'natural' in 'He could smell her faint natural perfume' (SL 375).

The publication of the Cambridge edition of Sons and Lovers, however, reveals that in their contexts these deleted 'erotic' words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs are far from obscene. Nor do they make the novel an indecent work. Although the book in general is essentially about love, it contains no explicit sexual scenes.⁹¹ As in The Trespasser, even in Sons and Lovers sex never becomes an issue as such. Claims that Lawrence's third novel has no warmth 'but the warmth of lust',⁹² contains 'incessant scenes of sexual passion',⁹³ or that it reveals his 'exaggerated sense of the physical side of love'⁹⁴ cannot be substantiated. Nor is it true that, like the circle of his people, Paul lives 'by sense and sense alone',⁹⁵ or that he is simply a 'lustful' young man.⁹⁶

Paul's interest in Clara, or in any other woman, cannot be equated with 'lust'. Paul is not a sexual animal. As Peter Balbert puts it - in spite of being obsessed by his idea that Sons and Lovers is 'a hymn to the phallus'⁹⁷ - Paul 'never appears even vaguely like a stud'.⁹⁸ Aware that the factory girls adore him, Paul is careful to control himself when any of them is on the verge of getting 'hysterical' (SL 311) in his presence. If Paul were a womaniser he would not have felt 'uncomfortable' because of a purely sexual being like Miss Limb (SL 277). Nor would he have bothered to convince himself that his relation with a married woman like Clara is 'simply friendship': 'he considered that he was perfectly honourable with regard to her. It was only a friendship between man and woman, such as any civilised persons might have'

(SL 319). Moreover, if Malcolm Pittock's claim that 'lust' is 'more appropriate' a word than 'passion' and 'love' to describe what Paul wants from women were true,⁹⁹ then one would expect Paul to indulge in orgies with any woman when his sexual needs are thwarted. Paul's 'orgiastic' behaviour never goes beyond flirting. By the end of the book he hurries to a place where he could flirt. Yet even at this stage when he has broken off with Miriam and Clara he hardly becomes sex-obsessed. A barmaid he flirts with 'was no more to him than the brass pump-handle she drew' (SL 457).

Paul enjoys looking at a pretty woman more for the aesthetic pleasure he gets from her as a beautiful creature than as a sex symbol. The artist takes precedence over the lover in him when he contemplates unclad Miriam for the first time:

He never forgot seeing her as she lay naked on the bed, when he was unfastening his collar. First he saw only her beauty, and was blind with it. She had the most beautiful hips he had ever imagined. He stood unable to move or speak, looking at her, his face half smiling with wonder. (SL 333)

Garnett replaced 'hips' with 'body', apparently failing to notice somehow that Paul is greatly impressed not because he is seeing a woman in the flesh, but a living statue, a breathing 'work of art'. In Clara's case, not only Paul enjoys contemplating her physical beauty, he also tries to capture it in his art. He is impressed particularly by Clara's 'creamy', 'gleaming' arms (SL 302):

During the summer, Clara wore sometimes a dress of soft cotton stuff with loose sleeves. When she lifted her hands, her sleeves fell back, and her beautiful strong arms shone out.

'Half a minute,' he cried. "Hold your arm still.'

He made sketches of her hand, and the drawings contained some of the fascination the real thing had for him. (SL 336)

Paul paints Clara's arm much in the same way as Lady Chrystabel in The White Peacock draws Greek statues of Annable. Unlike Lady Chrystabel, though, Paul does not treat Clara simply as a model. He is also interested in her as a sexual being. Paul and Clara are both impulsive and full of energy. Being a passionate woman, Clara admires in Paul what Miriam resents most. If for Miriam 'he was too quick' (SL 247), Clara 'loved him for his quick, unexpected movements, like a young animal' (SL 308).

There is hardly anything Paul does not do suddenly, quickly, abruptly, sharply. Paul is Lawrence's most vital artistic hero, and Clara one of his most interesting vital heroines.

Clara is important to Paul not only because she can read and appreciate his vitality. Unlike Miriam who shrinks from any physical contact with Paul, Clara is ever willing to respond in kind and with dignity to his passionate nature: 'She turned to him with a splendid regal movement. Her mouth was offered him, and her throat, her eyes were half shut, her breast was tilted as if it asked for him' (SL 353). During such moments Clara is too happy to leave herself 'in his hands' (SL 353), and gives way to joy when he kisses her (SL 356).

Aware that Clara is always a willing partner, Paul's reaction during and after passionate moments with her is completely different from similar moments with Miriam. The warmth of Clara's bosom in his chest makes Paul feel 'whole' (SL 396). 'If I start to make love to you,' Paul confesses to her, 'I just go like a leaf down the wind -' (SL 407):

It was true as he said. As a rule, when he started love-making, the emotion was strong enough to carry with it everything, reason, soul, blood, in a great sweep, like the Trent carries bodily its black-swirls and intertwinings, noiselessly. Gradually the little criticisms, the little sensations were lost, thought also went, everything borne along in one flood. He became, not a man with a mind, but a great instinct. His hands were like creatures, living; his limbs, his body were all life and consciousness, subject to no will of his, but living in themselves. Just as he was, so it seemed the vigorous, wintry stars were strong also with life. He and they struck with the same pulse of fire. And the same joy of strength which held the bracken-frond stiff near his eyes held his own body firm. It was as if he and the stars and the dark herbage and Clara were licked up in an immense tongue of flame which tore onwards and upwards. Everything rushed along in living beside him, everything was still, perfect in itself, along with him. This wonderful stillness in each thing in itself, while it was being borne along in a very ecstasy of living, seemed the highest point of bliss. (SL 408)

Paul is not the first Lawrentian artist who feels so close to nature, identifies himself with it, and experiences a welcome 'stillness' in the wake of passionate encounters. In The Trespasser Siegmund sees himself as partner of the sea and worshipper of the sun. He enjoys contemplating the crashing of the waves just as he likes to be bitten directly by the scorching sun. Such intense moments give him the stillness and tranquillity

which he experiences occasionally also after making love to Helena. In Sons and Lovers, however, Clara is the main source through which Paul comes to know 'the baptism of fire in passion' (SL 399) as well as to enjoy a 'wonderful stillness'. Paul and Clara are frequently passionate: 'Together they had received the baptism of life, each through the other' (SL 405). That is why they look like 'a statue in one block' (SL 383) when they stand 'clasped rigid together, mouth to mouth'.

Considering the important role Clara plays in Paul's initiation to passionate life rather than simply to sex commentators are often puzzled by the artist's breaking off with her. Paul leaves Clara for several reasons, but the main one has to do with her attitude towards his art. Although sometimes she praises his work, Clara is usually 'critical and cold' (SL 306) towards his painting. Unlike Miriam, Clara hardly discusses his drawing, even when he asks her 'enthusiastically' about her opinion. Her response in such cases is: 'It doesn't interest me much' (SL 306).

Apparently, Clara refuses to be drawn into discussions about his paintings not because they do not appeal to her but because she fails to understand his artistic nature. Differently from Miriam who likes Paul particularly for his ability to bring to life what he contemplates in nature, Clara resents any manifestation of his romantic soul. Enjoying the view of the Lincolnshire coast, which he loves (SL 179, 400), Paul exclaims during his holiday with Clara there:

'It's very fine,' he said.

'Now don't get sentimental,' she said.

It irritated her to see him standing gazing at the sea, like a solitary and poetic person. He laughed. (SL 401)

Clara's down-to-earth attitude in such moments, but particularly her inability to understand and appreciate his art, make Paul unhappy in many cases: 'I thought you would understand,' he tells her, angry and disappointed (SL 306). Gradually, Paul would conclude that although Clara gives him the passion he could not get from Miriam, yet she too is not 'there' for him (SL 397). Clara is aware that she never fully had 'some part, big and vital in him' (SL 405), but she did not 'ever try to get it, or even to realise what it was'. Paul the artist is beyond her understanding. Eventually

Paul would realise that he 'had wanted her to be something she could not be' (SL 399), and so it is inevitable that:

now their missions were separate. Where he wanted to go she could not come with him. They would have to part sooner or later. Even if they married, and were faithful to each other, still he would have to leave her, go on alone, and she would only have to attend to him when he came home. But it was not possible. Each wanted a mate to go side by side with. (SL 405)

Engrossed in their efforts to highlight Lawrence's 'unfair' handling of the Miriam figure, feminists pay less attention to the fact that Clara too is not treated 'favourably'. These two one-sided female figures expose Lawrence's attitude about the subordinate position of woman in relationship with the artist. Being essentially an egoistic person, the fate of Paul's relationships with women is determined by their ability and efforts to 'serve' him.

Lawrence's and Paul's 'unfair' handling of women, however, becomes less problematic if Miriam and Clara are seen less as two women and more as symbolic figures, each appealing to a specific need of the artist. Lawrence created Miriam and Clara to magnify and to personify the spiritual and the passionate women Paul cannot do without. While he succeeded through these two women in highlighting what Paul the artist expects from a female companion, Miriam and Clara also expose one of Lawrence's weak points as a writer during the early years: his tendency to reduce characters to symbols.

The symbolic nature of Miriam and Clara is apparent not only in what they are able, but also in what they fail to offer to Paul. Miriam's excessive spirituality and failure to understand Paul the man, and Clara's excessive sexuality and failure to understand Paul the artist are the crucial reasons behind their breaking up.

Although Lawrence makes it clear that Paul leaves Miriam and Clara because neither of them understands and accepts both the man and the artist in him, it has often been postulated that Paul's relationships with the two women fail mainly as a result of his 'abnormal', 'incestuous' attachment for Mrs Morel. Paul is largely viewed as a psychoanalyst's case, as the most representative example of the Oedipus complex in

twentieth-century literature. The Freudian interpretation has been dogging this novel from the start. At present critics are more cautious in assigning themselves openly and unreservedly to the Freudian camp, yet the inclination to interpret many of Paul's problems, dilemmas, and frustrations in the light of Freud's theories is still obvious. The extent to which commentators resort to the Freudian interpretation of the Oedipus complex when they approach Sons and Lovers is one of the reasons why Paul's artistic status has often been eclipsed.

11. THE PRICE OF 'MODERNISING' SONS AND LOVERS: ASSESSING FRIEDA'S LEGACY

It has been suggested that his third novel marked the beginning of Frieda's 'rescuing' of Lawrence and of his art. Martin Green claims that Frieda was nothing less than the source and the very maker of Lawrence's genius from the time of Sons and Lovers. In a much more cautious tone John Worthen holds that until Lawrence's next completed novel 'The Sisters', the revised Sons and Lovers was Frieda's most important contribution to his writing.¹⁰⁰

While it is true that Frieda was 'the only sort of woman with whom D.H.L. could live',¹⁰¹ and that as from 1912 she played an important role in Lawrence's *oeuvre*, whether she was his ideal literary partner when he was writing his third novel is debatable. One of Frieda's first remarks on record on Sons and Lovers is that Lawrence 'quite missed the point' in it,¹⁰² that Paul's love for Mrs Morel is 'incestuous'. Jessie Chambers was critical of 'Paul Morel' before Frieda, but not for the same reason. Why Jessie, who was a sensitive critic as well as Lawrence's most intimate friend during his early years, 'failed' to detect any incestuous sign in Paul's attachment for his mother in 'Paul Morel' II and III remains yet to be investigated. Jessie's notes on 'Paul Morel' reveal that she was critical of Lawrence's depiction of the Miriam-Gertrude relationship. Yet not even once did she remark that she saw the Paul-mother relation as Oedipal. Nor had she been unhappy about Paul's attachment for Mrs Morel for

incest-related reasons. In Jessie's words, 'She [Miriam] never actually thought that Paul was tied to his mother: she loved him the better because of his love for his mother'.¹⁰³ And again, 'Miriam revered Paul's love for his mother'.¹⁰⁴ Jessie's attitude to Mrs Lawrence/Mrs Morel becomes more critical in her 1935 personal record of Lawrence where she hints that the Lawrence/Paul-mother attachment is abnormal. Even at this stage, though, Jessie is cautious not to put it plainly that she viewed such a relationship as simply Oedipal. Instead she chooses to quote what she had allegedly heard from Mrs Morel and her daughter Emily, to allude to the 'incestuous' aspect of Lawrence's love for his mother.¹⁰⁵

Although Frieda came across Lawrence for the first time when he was twenty-seven, she would claim from the start that Paul's, and for that matter Lawrence's love for his mother was 'real love, sort of Oedipus'.¹⁰⁶ In her 1935 memoirs Frieda emphasises that when she and Lawrence first met in 1912 'We talked about Oedipus and understanding leaped through our words'.¹⁰⁷ Lawrence himself never makes any explicit reference to this detail in his autobiographical pieces. Nor does he write anything like Frieda's statement when he offers a literary version of their encounter in Mr Noon. It seems highly unlikely that we will ever know if Lawrence simply failed to recollect this detail or if Frieda just made it all up. What cannot be disputed, however, is that, as John Worthen puts it, Frieda's memory 'was never particularly good'.¹⁰⁸ Moreover, it has frequently been remarked that Frieda's faulty memory was not always accidental. Robert Lucas refers to her 'disconcerting habit of...camouflaging facts',¹⁰⁹ and so, to quote Emile Delavenay, 'everything she said required careful scrutiny'.¹¹⁰

Even if Lawrence and Frieda did indeed discuss Oedipus during their first encounter, it is possible that she misunderstood his interest in the topic. It is worth mentioning that Oedipus caught Lawrence's attention when he was considering taking a major decision in his life: giving up teaching to become a full-time writer. Almost a year prior to his first meeting with Frieda, Lawrence had concluded that the Greek tragedies 'make one feel sufficiently fatalistic....quiet and indifferent'.¹¹¹ It was through classical masterpieces such as Oedipus Tyrannus that he initially realised that no one

'can alter fate, and useless it is to rail against it', that he could do nothing but pursue his writing career much in the same way that Oedipus was unable to alter his destiny. Apparently, the emphasis in Oedipus on 'destiny' as a notion rather than 'incest' as such made Lawrence consider the tragedy as 'the finest drama of *all* times'.¹¹² There is not a single case throughout the years when Lawrence was busy writing Sons and Lovers that he would pay attention to Oedipus as an incestuous figure.

Unlike Lawrence, Frieda was interested in Oedipus mainly because of what she had heard about the Greek tragic hero through Freud's theory. For the first time Freud's 'incest' theory was published in Die Traumdeutung in 1899, and Frieda heard about it initially from her psychoanalyst lover Otto Gross who, in her words, was 'a remarkable disciple' of Freud.¹¹³ Frieda claimed in 1942 that by the time she met Lawrence, she too was 'a great Freud admirer'.¹¹⁴

In spite of her admiration for Freud, Frieda was far from an expert in psychoanalysis, and she admitted herself that at that stage she was 'full of undigested theories'.¹¹⁵ All the same, Frieda had the merit of introducing Lawrence for the first time to the ideas of one of the great revolutionary European intellectuals.

Psychoanalysis as a science was indeed something new to Lawrence by 1912. Yet psychoanalytic concerns had been present in his *oeuvre* (and correspondence) from the start of his writing career. As Anne Fernihough observes, The White Peacock and short stories like 'The Shadow of Spring' and 'A Modern Lover' - The Trespasser is by no means an odd-one-out in this list - show that Lawrence had some views on the 'unconscious' and 'self-consciousness' before he knew of Freud.¹¹⁶ Lawrence's handling of the artist theme in these early works reveals that, by the time he was acquainted with the newly-emerging psychoanalysis, he had already attempted to explore in fiction what Freud had been trying to formulate through his scientific approach. Much of Lawrence's interest in psychoanalysis in 1912 came from the fact that he found in it 'some comfort and reassurance' for what he had been thinking on his own for some time.¹¹⁷ Likewise, Lawrence paid attention to the new science apparently because he

hoped to find in it satisfactory answers to some questions about the 'unconscious' and 'self-consciousness' which he had been unable to solve by himself.

As Freud's theories became available in English in 1913 and Lawrence could not read German, however, Frieda remained his main 'teacher' of psychoanalysis prior to his meeting professional psychoanalysts in 1914.¹¹⁸ This means that throughout the years he was writing and revising 'Paul Morel' III and IV Lawrence had to depend on whatever 'undigested' information Frieda had gleaned from Otto Gross.

While it is impossible to determine which and how many words and paragraphs Frieda inserted or changed in Sons and Lovers - she claimed co-authorship more than once¹¹⁹ - on the other hand, it cannot be disputed that her contribution was bound to have a considerable impact on the book as a whole. Although it has been often noted that Frieda left her mark on the novel, only few commentators attempt to illustrate traces of her influence, and of those who take the challenge almost none tends to see Frieda's impact as damaging to the work.¹²⁰

The general belief so far is that the Oedipal twist Lawrence gave the story as a result of Frieda's intervention¹²¹ is apparent mainly in Paul's relationship with his mother, Miriam and Clara. The last two drafts of the novel, though, indicate that, apparently, Frieda affected much in the same way also Lawrence's conception of the father figure. John Worthen observes that in the last two versions the tendency is to make Mr Morel more drunken, more violent: '[H]e is treated less forgivingly in other ways.'¹²² In the previous 'Paul Morel', for instance, children think the father 'generous' because they 'got more pennies from him than from their mother, who was rather stern in the matter'.¹²³ In the ultimate version of the novel not only this passage is dropped, but also quite the opposite point is made about the father. By now Mr Morel 'scarcely spared the children an extra penny, or bought them a pound of apples. It all went in drink' (SL 26). This further degradation of Mr Morel is apparently meant as yet another early step to make him a more vulnerable figure, and for that reason more hateful in the eyes of his children, but mainly of Paul who thinks that Mr Morel stands in his way to get the mother's attention.

It could be argued that Frieda's influence is also apparent in the changes Lawrence introduced in the treatment of William's relation with his mother and Paul. So for example, if in the old 'Paul Morel' William is described as being 'very thoughtful for his mother', in the ultimate version of the novel his 'love for his mother' is 'vexing his young growth'.¹²⁴ Also in the ultimate draft William adopts a different attitude towards his baby brother Paul, and towards the attention Mrs Morel pays to it:

Then he did not like the new baby
 'He looks very nasty, mother,' he said.
 'Why?' asked the mother.
 'It scowls,' said William.

Then Mrs Morel kissed the baby quickly....Often she sat singing nursery rhymes to it.

'He can't understand you, what do you sing to him for?' said William.

'Well, he likes the noise, I'm sure,' said the mother, laughing with her rare warmth shining in her blue eyes, at the baby, worrying the tiny fingers with her lips; while William stood aside and fumed. (SL 44-5)

Such developments in the final conception of William explain why the title of the book was changed from 'Paul Morel' to Sons and Lovers. These changes, however, do not seem to have been received well by Edward Garnett. The editor dropped not only the passage above, but also other passages and scenes of similar nature. This suggests that Garnett felt uneasy about the new direction in which the novel was heading.

Apparently, Lawrence was flattered by Frieda's attempts to interpret his third novel in the light of the new challenging theory of the Oedipus complex. In spite of his willingness to seek¹²⁵ and follow Frieda's advice, Lawrence too was hardly completely happy with the changes in the manuscript. Their correspondence of those years when he was engaged in writing Sons and Lovers reveals that completing the work proved to be a painstaking task for both of them. Frieda reports how they used to fight 'like blazes' over the novel when Lawrence read bits of it to her.¹²⁶

Commentators have usually seen such 'fights' as proof of Frieda's relentless attempts 'to cure' Lawrence from his 'abnormal' attachment for his dead mother. While it is true that in Sons and Lovers Lawrence fictionalised much of his own early life-experiences, it is worth noting that he also insisted from the first that his third novel

'isn't the truth. It isn't meant for the truth. It's an adaptation from life, as all art must be'.¹²⁷ This suggests that he was not arguing with Frieda simply as a 'son-lover', which she would always insist he was. Seeing how stubborn Frieda was in her attempts to interpret the Paul-Gertrude relationship only in the light of the Oedipal theory, it was inevitable that Lawrence would grow increasingly uneasy with her - Frieda admitted they had many 'long arguments' about the novel and Freud during those early years¹²⁸ - and so tried to minimise as much as he could her interfering.

In spite of such attempts Lawrence often gave in to Frieda's insistence. Helen Baron observes that there are discernible changes of handwriting throughout the surviving fragments of the third and fourth versions of the novel. The critic mentions in particular the scene in which Mrs Morel demands of her three-year-old- Paul: 'What are you crying for?'¹²⁹ The change in Lawrence's handwriting is obvious by the end of the scene when the narrator states that Paul's 'fits were not often, but they caused a shadow in Mrs Morel's heart, and her treatment of Paul was different from that of the other children' (SL 65). Any meticulous reader of the Cambridge edition of Sons and Lovers would conclude that this statement is in contradiction with Mrs Morel's treatment of Paul in Part I. Her attention being absorbed only by the robust, successful William in whom she hopes so much, Mrs Morel hardly displays any special attention to the slim delicate and shadowy Paul.

Considering that Frieda stresses repeatedly that she herself wrote some 'bits',¹³⁰ it is worth investigating how 'discernible' these discernible changes are, and what impact, if any, they have on the narrative as a whole. If Frieda did not write the above lines in the manuscript, the changes of calligraphy may well indicate Lawrence's 'remarkable capacity to write while on the move and while living in strange temporary accommodation'.¹³¹ On the other hand, such changes of handwriting may also reflect Lawrence's reluctance to write what his 'co-author' dictated to him.

The novel records other cases when Lawrence, apparently, attempts to reduce and dilute Frieda's intrusive influence and the work's Oedipal connotations. Ironically enough, this tendency is obvious also in the scene in which Mr Morel finds his wife and

Paul kissing. This scene is often considered by psychoanalyst-literary critics as epitomising the incestuous son-mother attachment in the book. Prior to Mr Morel's coming Gertrude expresses her anger to Paul for 'chasing' Miriam to talk of books and painting. Desperate to convince her that he does not love Miriam, Paul stoops to kiss his mother:

she threw her arms round his neck, hid her face on his shoulder, and cried, in a whimpering voice, so unlike her own that he writhed in agony:

'I can't bear it. I could let another woman - but not her - she'd leave me no room, not a bit of room -'

And immediately he hated Miriam bitterly.

'And I've never - you know, Paul - I've never had a husband - not really -'

He stroked his mother's hair, and his mouth was on her throat.

'And she exults so in taking you from me - she's not like ordinary girls.'

'Well, I don't love her mother,' he murmured, bowing his head and hiding his eyes on her shoulder in misery. His mother kissed him in a long, fervent kiss:

'My boy!' she said, in a voice trembling with passionate love. Without knowing, he gently stroked her face.

'There,' said his mother, 'now go to bed. You'll be *so* tired in the morning.'

(SL 252)

Even in this apparently Oedipal passage Mrs Morel is not jealous of all women Paul is familiar with. The mother is against Miriam alone because she believes that this young woman 'is one of those who will want to suck a man's soul out till he has none of his own left' (SL 196). Few can dispute that Miriam does pose such a threat to Paul. As for the incestuous notes of the scene, it is obvious that Lawrence tries to dilute them without delay. No matter how much she is opposed to Miriam, Mrs Morel finally blames herself for being 'selfish', adding: 'If you want her, take her, my boy' (SL 252).

By the time their conversation about Miriam is over, Mrs Morel and Paul hear the father coming:

His mother looked so strange, Paul kissed her, trembling....

Morel came in, walking unevenly. His hat was over one corner of his eyes. He balanced in the doorway.

'At your mischief again?' he said, venomously.

Mrs Morel's emotion turned into sudden hate of the drunkard who had come in thus upon her.

'At any rate, it is sober,' she said.

'Hm - hm! hm - hm!' he sneered. (SL 252)

The fact that Lawrence chooses to use the verb 'kiss' in simple past and not in continuous tense implies that Paul's kissing of his mother was over before his father's entrance. Mrs Morel has already heard that her husband is coming before Paul kissed her for the last time, but she does not urge her son twice to go so that Mr Morel will not catch them 'red-handed'. The mother insists that Paul should go because if he does not sleep, he will be 'so tired in the morning' (SL 252) to go to Nottingham. Mr Morel's coming is another reason why the mother wants Paul to go to bed, and she puts it plainly that she does not want them to meet each other. But Mrs Morel expresses this wish right from the beginning of the scene when she and Paul have not yet begun talking about Miriam or kissing. Her request - 'You'd better go to bed before your father comes in' (SL 250) - is indicative of her intention to avoid in advance a quarrel which she knows will happen if son and father meet so late. Mother and son have been discussing about Mr Morel for the last time a couple of pages earlier when they found on the table the 'measly twenty-five shillings' (SL 239) he had left for her for the week although the cheque was ten pounds eleven.

Mr Morel is used to his wife's complaints about the little money he gives her every week, and to the solidarity which the children, but particularly Paul, always display for her. Mr Morel knows that upon his return from the pub, his wife and son would turn upon him for the little money he has left, and so is on the defensive from the first moment he enters the house. Mrs Morel finds his attitude too much to bear particularly because he is drunk. It is no coincidence that the quarrel that ensues between him, his wife and Paul is about money. 'If you can give me no more than twenty five shillings,' Mrs Morel blurts seeing her husband eating the pie she has bought for Paul, 'I'm sure I'm not going to buy you pork-pie to stuff, after you've swilled a belly-ful of beer' (SL 252-3).

Frieda's impact on the novel, her claims about the incestuous nature of the Paul-Mrs Morel attachment, as well as the interpretations offered by Freudians during the past eighty years have undermined somehow our perception of much of the beauty and

symbolism of Sons and Lovers. Above all, the Freudian approach has detracted attention considerably from Paul Morel's artistic status. The failure to recognise the artist in Paul makes it inevitable that much of his childhood and youth problems and worries as well as his happy moments would be seen as 'abnormal' or unrelated to one another. Likewise, if the crucial aspect of Paul's character - his artistic nature - is not treated with the attention it deserves, the difficult time he has particularly by the end of the book, as well as his 'gloomy' future are bound to be misunderstood. Paul's artistry is his Achilles' heel: while it makes him vulnerable, it also serves as the main source of the strength and stamina he displays more than ever when as a 'derelict' he has to choose between death and life.

12. FOR THE SAKE OF THE ARTISTIC MISSION

12.1 The Artist at Work

Lawrence pays attention to the artistic vocation of the main protagonist in Sons and Lovers more than in any other work. As early as 'Paul Morel' I the Paul figure called Fred/Wm emerges as a child interested in art. Moreover, Paul is an artist with specific artistic interests. Unlike Cyril Beardsall who can hardly be described exclusively as a poet or a painter, Paul is said to be interested only in painting from the first, and he 'stuck' (SL 142) to it to the end. In the initial 1910 'Plot' 'painting' is mentioned several times with regard to the Paul figure as a child. The earliest references are made in Chapters VI and VII of Part I.¹³² In the second part 'painting' recurs three more times: in Chapter II the boy takes lessons in painting from Miss Wright, in Chapter III the word 'painting' is mentioned in reference to Miss Haywood (the Miss Jordan of the later versions), and in Chapter IV the Paul figure's friendship with Flossie (something of the Clara protagonist) is described as 'great' after 'painting in Castle'.

Apparently, in the initial chapter plan education and painting are the hero's main interests. In the versions that followed, however, Lawrence pays more attention to Paul's interests in painting than to education. In the final draft, for example, Paul's

attachment to painting is first mentioned in Chapter IV, that is, two chapters earlier than in the initial version. This final Paul is 'very fond of drawing' (SL 98) from an early age. He 'love[s]' to draw, is 'very clever with the brush' (SL 108), indeed 'quite a clever painter, for a boy of his years' (SL 113). Unlike his siblings, Paul prefers to remain alone at home drawing (SL 98) on Friday nights. But not only on Friday: there is hardly a moment when Paul is not practising his art. He paints at any time and at any place. Nothing can divert his attention from it. He paints even during the most unlikely and unsuitable moments such as Mr Morel's accident, William's death, Arthur's conscription, and Mrs Morel's dying hours. Apparently, the time this artist spends painting suggests not only that he is devoted to his art but also that he uses it as an escape during difficult moments.

Like his creator, Paul is an 'autobiographical' artist. He paints what he knows best: the native valley, the collieries, Willey Farm, the city of Nottingham, and the people who are most dear to him such as his mother, Miriam and Clara.

There is no one in the book who does not know that Paul is a painter, and hardly anyone fails to appreciate his art. Paul is the first Lawrentian artist with 'disciples' (SL 179). The farmers and the factory girls are great admirers of his art, and his mother feels enormously proud to see his first-prize paintings in the gallery (SL 222). Paul's professional abilities and achievements as an artist are noticed and praised by connoisseurs in painting (SL 139. If Siegmund at the age of forty concludes desperately that he has 'no genius' (Tr 163), and does not 'feel much like a Lord of Creation' (Tr 179), Paul is constantly proud of his art, and confident that 'I s'll make a painter that they'll attend to' (SL 345).

Although Paul's status as an artist has been established throughout the book, the general tendency so far has been to ignore that Lawrence's most memorable literary *alter ego* is primarily an artistic figure. Attempts have been made to see Sons and Lovers as a bildungsroman, yet more remains to be said what makes it so, and how it differs from the traditional kind of bildungsroman attempted, say, by romantic artists.¹³³ In most cases commentators hardly see Paul's experiences and maturing as

part of his artistic growth. Nor do they consider the fact that Paul is a painter as the most essential thing about him. Paul's artistic disposition is often mentioned only in passing. He has been referred to as a 'worker possessed by an artistic temper',¹³⁴ an 'artistic' 'artisan',¹³⁵ 'an artistically inclined young man'.¹³⁶

The earliest attempts to see Paul primarily as an artist are made by Maurice Beebe and John Hardy whose 'Lawrence's Sacred Fount: The Artist Theme in Sons and Lovers', and 'Sons and Lovers: The Artist as Saviour' came out respectively in 1962 and 1964. Of late Sons and Lovers has been approached as a portrait-of-an-artist novel by Colin Milton and John Worthen.¹³⁷ In spite of their importance, these attempts have hardly highlighted how crucial Paul's artistry is to understand his worries, triumphs and defeats. Nor have they been able to challenge in any way that matters those critics - Freudian, vitalist, feminist, autobiographical - who pay little or no attention to Paul's quest for artistic fulfilment and freedom.

12.2 The Artist as a Detached Figure

While Cyril, Siegmund and other early Lawrentian figures are undoubtedly artists, the word 'artist' as such is used for the first time only in reference to Paul Morel. In Sons and Lovers the term 'artist' is mentioned approximately four times. Yet this word can hardly be fully interchanged with the word 'painter'. While the two words are complementary to each other, by 'painter' Lawrence denotes Paul's 'profession' as a creative man, whereas by 'artist' he connotes the protagonist's ontology of being.

Initially the word 'artist' appears in 'Paul Morel' III, but at this stage it is not used to refer to Paul but to Mrs Morel. The mother is said to be like an artist 'uncaught by life, watching'.¹³⁸ In 'Paul Morel' IV 'artist' is used no longer to modify Mrs Morel. By now it is Paul who is always likened to the artist.

Although the term 'artist' in the last two drafts is used to modify two different characters, its connotation remains essentially unchanged. Like his mother in 'Paul Morel' III, the Paul of the ultimate version is constantly 'watching' life but is never

caught by it. In Chapter VII Miriam suddenly becomes aware of Paul's keen eyes upon her, taking her all in, and is greatly disturbed: 'She resented his seeing everything....that he saw so much' (SL 176). Later in the same chapter, she 'saw him look at the house, and she shrank away. He walked in a nonchalant fashion' (SL 207). The scrutiny of Paul's 'impersonal, deliberate gaze of an artist' (SL 224) starts the conflict between him and Baxter Dawes; the uncouth smith felt 'as if he had been stung' when 'he found the youth with his cool, critical gaze fixed on his face'.

In the second half of the book Paul admits that he looks at things and people, likes or dislikes them, as an artist: always scrutinising and never committed. Asked by Miriam what he likes about Clara, Paul replies: 'I don't know - her skin and the texture of her - and her - I don't know - there's a sort of fierceness somewhere in her. - I appreciate her as an artist, that's all' (SL 225). Miriam herself would soon conclude that this is how he appreciates her too: 'He took no notice of Miriam. Later, she saw him remark her new blouse, saw the artist approved, but it won from him not a spark of warmth' (SL 256). Paul's 'artist's eye' (SL 405) remains constantly watching to the end of the book, while he remains as 'uncaught' as ever.

Paul's habit of keeping himself to himself becomes more apparent firstly after he breaks with Miriam, and then with Clara. Both women notice and object to Paul's detachment, accusing him of playing foul with them. Like Helena Verden, who concludes that Siegmund ignores her after he has 'a sufficiency' of her (Tr 119), Miriam and Clara believe that Paul 'dumps' them after he takes what he 'wanted' (SL 451), as he does not want 'any more' (SL 339) of them.

Some feminists make capital of Miriam's and Clara's denunciation of Paul's 'mean[ness]' (SL 451) to vilify him as a treacherous lover. To Kate Millett, 'Paul kills or disregards the women who have been of use to him'.¹³⁹ Feminists are particularly opposed to what they see as Lawrence's presentation of women only as instruments for Paul's awakening to manhood. In Faith Pullin's words, 'Lawrence is a ruthless user of women...the mother, Miriam, and Clara are all manipulated in Paul's effort at self-identity, the effort to become himself'.¹⁴⁰

Feminists have a case when they accuse Paul - and for that matter Lawrence - of using women as 'means' of achieving what he wants. After all, Paul is an 'egoist' (SL 360): he takes an interest in Miriam and then in Clara to satisfy his spiritual and sexual needs. But if Paul's motives are seen as proof of his being an egoist who victimises women, they too are not less 'guilty' than him. Women tend to 'exploit' Paul as much as he 'exploits' them. Miriam needs Paul to sustain her religiosity. She wants not a 'mate' but a Christ in him (SL 463). Only through him she can have the communion with nature which satisfies her soul. As for Clara who 'trusted altogether to the passion' (SL 408), her interest in him is primarily sexual. Only Paul understands how much Clara's pride was dented by a 'beast' (SL 314) like her husband. Clara views Paul as the 'instrument' who can make her insulted sexuality 'holy' again: 'She wanted him, but not to understand him...she wanted the man on top, not the real him that was in trouble' (SL 451).

Both Miriam and Clara are fully aware of what attracts Paul to them - the former that '[h]is soul wanted her' (SL 261), and the latter that passion 'held him to her' (SL 408) - yet they are both unable to the end to understand that Paul needs more than what they could offer him. As long as he caters for their spiritual and sexual needs they deem him as normal. But if he is frustrated because of what they deny him, both Miriam and Clara dub him 'stupid' (SL 261), 'unreasonable' (SL 340), 'perverse child' (SL 463), the 'enfant terrible' (SL 314). They treat him 'indulgently' (SL 336) because, to them, he is hardly aware of what he wants. They are adamant that they have the key to Paul's being and survival. To the end of the novel the two women believe that without them and their protection, this 'deficient' (SL 261) young man would be lost.

But Paul is neither a 'child' nor a 'gabby' (SL 196) who has 'that poignant carelessness about himself, his own suffering, his own life' (SL 300). Nor is he a 'prey' to women (SL 461). On the contrary, to quote Julian Moynahan, 'Paul is a hero rather than a victim'.¹⁴¹ In spite of his difficulties and wavering, Paul emerges from the start as a young man who is always aware of what he wants and where he intends to go in life. Mrs Morel can hardly see that Paul, whom she has never considered as a high-

flyer of the William type, is aware of his powers (SL 222). Likewise, Paul is not ignorant of his actual motives, as Seymour Betsky,¹⁴² and other Freudians claim. If the mother, Miriam and Clara who sustain Paul's growth are not certain of his goal/s, this is not so much his fault rather than their inability to understand fully that, as he put it, 'I'm only myself' (SL 273). Paul is confident that 'I should be the marvel I am' (SL 405) throughout his life.

Edward Garnett's cutting of the novel seems to be one of the reasons why commentators have largely failed to acknowledge that Paul is a motivated hero. In Chapter VII, for instance, the editor left out the crucial discussion Paul and Miriam have directly after they leave the library:

'Yet,' he said, 'I reckon we've got a proper way to go - and if we go it, we're all right - and if we go near it. But if we go wrong, we die. I'm sure our William went wrong somewhere.'

'And if we follow the course of our lives, we don't die?' she asked.

'No we don't. What we are inside makes us so that we ought to go one particular way, and no other.'

'But do we know when we're following the true course?' she asked.

'Yes! *I* do. I know I'm following mine.'

'You do?' she asked.

'Yes - I'm certain.' (SL 193).

Even without this telling passage, however, Paul's clear purpose in life, and his determination to pursue his 'true course' can hardly be missed. He goes on 'determinedly', 'persistent[ly]' (SL 324), 'calmly', 'unswerving[ly]' (SL 338) in whatever he does. If he decides to do something, it is 'irrevocable' (SL 339): whether to oppose his mother's patronising attitude or to break off with Miriam and Clara. Only gradually would these women come to realise and fear his 'quiet resolutions' (SL 264). It took Mrs Morel some time to realise and accept that Paul 'did things with more intensity, and more realisation of what he was about' than William (SL 324). If Paul 'had made up his mind, nothing on earth would alter him.'

That Paul is aware of his artistic potential, and is determined to pursue his artistic career is also obvious from his full name: Paul Morel. Lawrence was known to be meticulous about christening his characters with significant names, and this is evident

particularly in Paul's case. Attempts have been made to explain why Lawrence names his main literary *alter ego* Paul Morel. Yet in no case is this name seen as connoting Paul's artistic nature. Lawrence changed the name of Fred/Wm into Paul shortly after he plotted out the novel for the first time. The Apostle Paul is largely accepted to epitomise 'will' and 'intellect' in Christianity; something which the protagonist of Sons and Lovers displays constantly. Nothing can make Paul Morel swerve from his purpose, not even his close relationship with his mother, Miriam and Clara. He is ready to sacrifice anything and anybody to realise what he has set himself to.

The family name Morel makes the protagonist a more complex figure. John Worthen holds that Lawrence uses the surname 'Morel' to suggest his own French connection.¹⁴³ Considering that at the outset of his career Lawrence expressed the intention to 'settle in France and write for the French',¹⁴⁴ whose literature he admired greatly,¹⁴⁵ it is possible that through the French word he wanted to hint at Paul's artistic nature and aspirations. Likewise, 'Morel' seems to be connected also with the 'morel', a kind of cherry which symbolises passion in folklore and literature. 'Will' and 'intellect', cultural and artistic inspiration, spirituality and passion, fulfilment and disillusionment are all blended together in the name of Paul Morel.

The symbolic name of the main protagonist reveals more than the essence of his character. It also summarises in just two words what the novel is about: the long quest of a determined young artist for self-fulfilment and freedom. The connotation of the protagonist's name and the implications it has for the novel in general explain why Lawrence called the book from the first 'Paul Morel'.

It is worth noting that the third novel is perhaps the only work for which Lawrence experienced no difficulty in finding a title. He did not have to think of 'hundreds of titles, and rejected them all', as was the case with The White Peacock.¹⁴⁶ Nor did he cry for help,¹⁴⁷ as he had done when he could not decide how to name The Trespasser. From the first Lawrence chose for his third novel the title 'Paul Morel', and would stick to it for exactly two years.

Lawrence mentioned Sons and Lovers as a possible title in October 1912 when he had completed most of the ultimate version of the book. How Lawrence came to think of changing the title so suddenly remains a mystery which probably will never be solved. What is clear, however, is that he expressed no enthusiasm about the new title; he always referred to it in a matter-of-fact way.¹⁴⁸ This suggests not only that Lawrence was hardly convinced that Sons and Lovers was the right title, but also that the idea probably was not necessarily his in the first place.

Considering that Frieda is largely responsible for introducing matter suggestive of incest into the book - Lawrence would depict William's love for Mrs Morel as 'vexing' his young growth, as well as his jealousy for his baby brother Paul only in 'Paul Morel' IV - it is possible that the Freudian title Sons and Lovers was first suggested by her. It is not accidental, perhaps, that Frieda's initial is mentioned in the same sentence of the letter in which Lawrence asks Garnett's opinion about the new title for the first time: 'Can I call it Sons and Lovers? - or - this funny hand-writing is F.'s [Frieda's] fault.'¹⁴⁹ As Frieda tried to impose her own titles on other major works of Lawrence,¹⁵⁰ it cannot be ruled out that she did not try to do the same with his third novel, which after all she considered as her own.¹⁵¹

Had Lawrence retained the initial title 'Paul Morel', or chosen to name the book something like James Joyce's A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, one wonders if the novel would have been likened so much to Sophocles' Oedipus Tyrannus,¹⁵² or Paul seen mostly as 'a case study of neurosis'.¹⁵³ They say appearances can be deceptive, and Sons and Lovers shows that even a title can be somehow misleading. Some critics are tempted to conclude what the book is about simply by its provocative title, although the relative discrepancy between the novel's name and its content is too obvious to ignore.

While it is true that Paul is a 'son-lover', his relationships with Miriam and Clara do not suffer only because of his close attachment for his mother. The spiritual Miriam and the erotic Clara fail to see, and so are unable to accept, both the artist and the man in him, which makes in fact 'the real him' (SL 451).

Paul is particularly frustrated also by the submerging love of these two women, by their attempts to make him exclusively theirs. Miriam wants 'her Paul' to belong only to her (SL 201). Her happiest moments are when 'she had him all to herself' (SL 210). Miriam 'always seemed absorbed in him and by him, when he was present' (SL 212). She loves him 'absorbedly' (SL 227), and wants 'to draw all of him into her' (SL 232). Like Miriam, Clara feels happy only if she feels 'she had at last got him for herself' (SL 389). She is 'mad' (SL 399) to have Paul, 'to grip' him all the time (SL 398); she wants him 'permanent[ly]'.

Paul is the first Lawrentian artist who wishes his relationship with a woman to be 'normal give and take....I want a woman to keep me, but not in her pocket' (SL 320). No matter how much the man and the artist in him needs a woman, Paul is not prepared to sacrifice his freedom for anyone, not even for Miriam who stimulates him as a painter, or for Clara with whom he 'received the baptism of life' (SL 405). Paul cannot give himself to them: 'I couldn't belong to them. They seem to want *me*, and I can't ever give it them' (SL 395).

The detached attitude Paul adopts often when he is with Miriam and Clara - there is 'something detached, hard and elemental' (SL 403) even about the way he makes love to them - is a clear sign of his protest against their attempts to 'monopolise' and be 'everything' to him (SL 265). As a detached artistic figure Paul is not without predecessors. Cyril Beardsall keeps himself to himself not less than Paul. Unlike Cyril, though, Paul's detachment is not presented as a whim. Cyril shuns women because he is aware of the negative impact they have on Annable and George. In the concluding chapters of The White Peacock Lawrence tries to justify Cyril's aloofness and his decision not to marry Emily by drawing a hasty unsympathetic portrait of her as a domineering wife. In Sons and Lovers, however, Paul is constantly in contact with possessing women. He does not need to draw conclusions from other men's experience to realise what is at stake for him as an artist if he is not detached from the likes of Miriam and Clara.

It could be argued that Paul knows about women more than other early Lawrentian artists because he is constantly warned by his mother about the dangers Miriam and Clara could pose to him. All the same, the deterioration of Paul's relationships with Miriam and Clara, and his eventual separation from them, should not be seen as the work of Mrs Morel. Paul leaves Miriam out of his own free will. Likewise, Paul's decision to part with Clara is his and not his mother's. Nor do they break off as a result of the grief he feels for the dead mother. Paul does not care about Clara, she makes him 'tired' (SL 412) before Mrs Morel's death. Both Miriam and Clara know well in advance that 'their missions were separate' (SL 405) from Paul's.

12.3 The Death of Mrs Morel

In contrast to one-sided figures like Miriam and Clara who hardly evolve throughout the book, Mrs Morel is constantly prone to change. Although in Part I she fails to be as close to Paul as he would have wished her to be, in Part II the mother emerges as his most intimate friend. Only now she realises his sensitive nature to the full, acknowledges his artistic talent, and takes pride in his work. She may still not like everything Paul does or say when they become close with each other, yet for his own sake she is willing to accept everything he wants, even if this means giving her approval to his friendship with Miriam (SL 338), whom she openly dislikes, or welcoming in Bestwood his married lady friend Clara in spite of being a staunch moralist (SL 359).

Mrs Morel becomes something of an oracle figure in the second half of the novel. She is the first to notice that Paul is restless because he needs passion as well as spiritual fulfilment, and that Miriam is an asexual creature. Mrs Morel 'wished bitterly that Miriam had been a woman who could take this new life of his' (SL 262). Likewise, the mother can see that Paul suffers after breaking off with Miriam in spite of his efforts to look cheerful (SL 344). Mrs Morel warns Paul in advance that Miriam would not 'give up hopes' of him, but at the same time she knows that neither Miriam nor

Clara poses any risk to him; the mother has understood by now that Paul does not approve of them to embark on a serious relationship with any of them. '[Y]ou'll tire of her, my son,' she says to Paul about the possessive Clara, 'you know you will' (SL 374) although 'she's as much sense as Miriam' (SL 395). Mrs Morel knows that 'it would be hard for any woman to keep' her 'pale and detached-looking' son (SL 365).

In spite of his tendency to put off Miriam and Clara, Mrs Morel is aware also that Paul needs to be held by a woman, and that eventually he will marry, although not young, and not until he will meet 'the one' that will suit him (SL 285). In the meantime, the mother advises him to do with all those who disturb him in order to be free (SL 412).

It is ironical, however, that Mrs Morel too is one of those Paul must 'do with'. No matter how much she comes to understand him in the second half, the mother would never come to terms with his determination to pursue an artistic career. Educated and cultured as she is, Mrs Morel is aware that art is a risky business for Paul to rely on to leave the working-class. Where Paul wants to go, the mother is not prepared to follow him, and what she wants him to do, he is not interested in. If Paul can free himself from Miriam and Clara by breaking with them, Mrs Morel is not someone he could leave or ignore so that he could pursue his artistic ambition. Theirs is a clash of interests that would be resolved only with her death.

Lawrence has been seen sometimes, to quote W. D. Snodgrass, as 'the least meticulous of serious writers'.¹⁵⁴ In spite of some inconsistencies, however, Sons and Lovers in general, and the way he handles the mother's death in particular, show that from the first Lawrence was careful with details. Mrs Morel does not die unexpectedly so that Paul would have an easy escape to freedom. Lawrence prepares her eventual death from the start of Part II, when he introduces the first hints that her health is in decline (SL 191).

The deterioration of Mrs Morel's health runs parallel with Paul's growing impatience with her intervention in his life, and with his frustration of being unable to leave because of her. Mrs Morel is aware that Paul wants her to die, but Lawrence is

tactfully not so much as to tone down what some critics tend to see as Paul's tendency to abandon the women who love and serve him,¹⁵⁵ as to highlight the high degree of emotional understanding that makes this son-mother relationship so unique: 'There was something between them that neither dared mention' (SL 412), 'their eyes, as they looked at each other, understood' (SL 416). Mother and son 'were afraid of each other. He knew, and she knew, that she was dying. But they kept up a pretence of cheerfulness' (SL 428).

Paul is often irritated seeing how stubbornly his dying mother clings to life, and in the end he cannot help blurting his irritation out: 'Mother, if I had to die, I'd die. I'd *will* to die' (SL 432). Realising that she 'will never give in' herself (SL 431), Paul thinks he himself has to put an end to her life. The matricidal motive is one of the most symbolic and controversial aspects of Sons and Lovers. The earliest hint that Paul would eventually hasten his mother's end comes in Part I, Chapter IV when he jumps 'crash' into the face of Annie's doll Arabella. Although Paul is sincerely 'so much upset' when the unfortunate incident happens, a day or two afterwards he would shock Annie with a proposal:

'Let's make a sacrifice of Arabella,' he said. 'Let's burn her.' She was horrified, yet rather fascinated. She wanted to see what the boy would do. He made an altar of bricks, pulled some of the shavings out of Arabella's body, put the waxen fragments into the hollow face, poured on a little paraffin, and set the whole thing alight. He watched with wicked satisfaction the drops of wax melt off the broken forehead of Arabella, and drop like sweat into the flame. So long as the stupid big doll burned, he rejoiced in silence. At the end, he poked among embers with a stick, fished out the arms and legs, all blackened, and smashed them under stones.

'That's the sacrifice of Missis Arabella,' he said. 'An' I'm glad there's nothing left of her.'

Which disturbed Annie inwardly, although she could say nothing. He seemed to hate the doll so intensely, because he had broken it. (SL 82-3)

The young 'executioners' in this scene are also joint accomplices in the killing of Mrs Morel. Words like 'wax', 'hollow' and 'horror' make the crashed Arabella an early kindred spirit of the cancer-stricken mother. Likewise, Annie's attitude when she attends the doll's sacrifice is almost the same with her behaviour when Paul tells her of

his idea to kill the mother. As a child she is 'horrified, yet rather fascinated. She wanted to see what the boy would do' with Arabella (SL 82). When she learns from Paul that he intends to put all the morphine pills available in Mrs Morel's night milk, Annie and he 'both laughed together like two conspiring children' (SL 437). Both brother and sister re-enact as adults what they had performed as children.

In spite of such similarities, the symbolic scene in which Paul and Annie burn Arabella differs considerably from that in which they poison their mother. This difference, however, is not easily recognised as it consists in what seems as an off-hand replacement of a word in the former scene with its antonym in the latter one. If Paul's proposal as a child and his attitude towards the sacrifice of the doll is described as a 'wicked' (SL 83) whim, his idea to terminate Mrs Morel's life is described as a 'sanity' (SL 437). It could be argued that Paul decides to poison her as he wants to put an end to her terrible pains. Yet the circumstances in which the idea occurs to him reveal that what concerns him more is not relieving her of her death pangs rather than relieving himself from her. Paul's poisoning of his mother is more of an act of egoism than of benevolence. By putting an end to her life he is actually putting an end to his lifelong attachment which has worried him so much both as a child and as a youth. Mrs Morel stands between him and life, and he is impatient to get rid of her. From the window of the sick room Paul observes that:

The snow *was* growing blue. He heard a cart clanking down the street. Yes, it was seven o'clock, and it was coming a little bit light. He heard some people calling. The world was waking. A grey, deathly dawn crept over the snow. Yes, he could see the houses. He put out the gas. It seemed very dark. The breathing came still, but he was almost used to it. He could see her. She was just the same. He wondered, if he piled heavy clothes on top of her, it would make it heavier and the horrible breathing would stop. He looked at her. That was not her - not her a bit. If he piled the blanket and heavy coats on her.

(SL 441)

Far from describing macabre intentions, Lawrence highlights here Paul's affirmation of life. By now the mother ceases to be a person: she has become a death symbol. Lawrence is implying in advance that Paul is not always depressed by the end of the novel. Nor should his pessimism be read only in terms of grief he feels for the loss of

his mother. After all, Paul 'did not take it tragically' (SL 444), and is 'quite jolly again' when Mrs Morel is not yet buried.

12.4 Optimism in 'Derelict'

Paul's depression in the final pages of the book seems to contradict Clara's conclusion that he did not take his mother's death tragically (SL 444). This 'contradiction' wanes considerably, however, if one considers that the word 'mother' in the chapter 'Derelict' means more than simply 'Mrs Morel', and 'death' more than her actual demise. The mother Paul mourns by now is the woman figure he has always needed beside him. Mrs Morel, Miriam and Clara know Paul wants 'to be kept' (SL 320), 'to be owned' (SL 362) 'badly' (SL 427), 'so that he could work' (SL 362). Paul himself accepts he wants to be kept (SL 320), pleading with Miriam and Clara 'to be with him...no matter what it is -' (SL 397).

Some feminists tend to ignore the great importance both Lawrence and his closest literary *alter ego* attach in this final chapter to the role of women in the life of an artist.¹⁵⁶ Paul has benefited considerably from the three women, and now that he is alone he appreciates more than ever how much they have been sustaining his life and artistic work for years. Feeling abandoned, cut off from life, now Paul 'wondered restlessly from one person to another, for some help, and there was none anywhere' (SL 435). With no one to support him 'of their own free initiative' (SL 451), Paul's drift/lapse 'towards death' (SL 451), towards his dead mother seems his only option.

In a letter written only one day after completing the final draft of Sons and Lovers Lawrence remarks that Paul 'is left in the end naked of everything, with the drift towards death'.¹⁵⁷ Why Lawrence made this specific remark is far from clear, and the letter in which it appears raises many questions that cannot be answered easily. What cannot be disputed, however, is that evidence from the novel as a whole, but mainly from its last pages, does not substantiate Lawrence's assessment of Paul's end. These

apparent contradictions between the book and the letter raise serious doubts regarding the 'exclusiveness' of Lawrence's authorship of the latter piece of writing.¹⁵⁸

Obviously Paul is very upset by the end of the book, but depression is not his only mood. He is in general an optimist at heart; something which is noticed by Baxter Dawes who shortly before Paul's final crisis predicts: 'you'll find it'll come all right' (SL 446). Clara too knows that Paul 'would never own to being beaten' (SL 450). His fighting spirit is seen clearly throughout the monologue recorded in the last pages. Paul's talking to himself is dominated by pessimistic remarks. Yet each of them is followed by an optimistic one. Finding himself alone for the first time, with no one at hand to 'take him and relieve him of the responsibility of himself' (SL 462) Paul feels lost: 'It's as if I was in a tangled sort of hole, rather dark and dreary, and no road anywhere' (SL 446). He has 'nowhere to go, nothing to do, nothing to say' (SL 456), and what makes his 'real agony' worse is that he feels he '*was* nothing himself'. At the same time, however, Paul begins to realise that only he could help himself to get out of the mess he feels in. As Lawrence put it in 1922, at the end Paul 'had his courage left'.¹⁵⁹ That Paul finds enough strength to pull himself through before it is too late is not a coincidence. As an adult he is always adamant that he is pursuing 'the true course' (SL 193), and that one day he would be a famous painter (SL 345). Paul knows he is a man with a mission, and it is his self-confidence that makes him conclude during the most critical moment in his life that he is 'something' (SL 464):

On every side the immense dark silence seemed pressing him, so tiny a speck, into extinction, and yet, almost nothing, he could not be extinct. Night, in which everything was lost, went reaching out, beyond stars and sun. Stars and sun, a few bright grains, went spinning round for terror and holding each other in embrace, there is a darkness that outpassed them all and left them tiny and daunted. So much, and himself, infinitesimal, at the core a nothingness, and yet not nothing. (SL 464)

Once his self-confidence is gradually restored, Paul's main concern is to realise where he belongs to. Although Paul decides not to give in but to 'go on alone' (SL 451) if necessary, he will not isolate himself from society. This is the message behind Paul's heading in the end for the city.

Paul's final decision to walk 'towards the city's gold phosphorescence' (SL 464) does not come as a surprise. This artist's bond with the city and the industrial world has already been forged by the time he makes up his mind not to follow his dead mother. Paul's childhood memories of the mines around Bestwood have nothing to do with his father's and other colliers' deplorable working conditions and daily accidents. Paul the adult remembers that his childish artistic imagination was constantly spurred by the Scriptures as well as by the mines. 'I am used to it,' he says to Clara about a coal-pit they see during her visit in Bestwood:

[']I should miss it. - No, and I like the pits here and there. I like the rows of the trucks, and the headstocks, and the steam in the daytime and the lights at night. - When I was a boy, I always thought a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night was a pit, with its steam, and its lights and the burning bank - and I thought the Lord was always at the pit-top.' (SL 364)

Paul is the first Lawrentian artist who takes industrialism as a subject for art. He is still young when he starts painting the industrial landscape of his native valley. Paul finds the pit 'wonderfully beautiful' (SL 152) because 'it heaps together, like something alive, almost - a big creature that you don't know' (SL 152). Likewise, unlike any artistic predecessor or follower, Paul finds no disharmony between the world of men and the machines. He likes 'the feel of *men* on things, while they're alive. There's a feel of men about trucks, because they've been handled with men's hands, all of them' (SL 152).

Paul's early attitudes towards the pits and working people indicate clearly that he would find himself at home in Nottingham at once. He enjoys his first visit there, and since then remains attached to the city. At the factory Paul is constantly busy making sketches 'of all the weird jungle of chimney pots and roof-ridges, ancient and peaked, that filled the prospect' (SL 138). He would disagree with Clara each time she 'loathe[s]' (SL 313) the 'unnatural' town (SL 314):

'But the town's all right,' he said. 'It's only temporary. This is the crude, clumsy make-shift we've practised on, till we find out what the idea is. The town will come all right.'

'The optimist by intention!' she smiled, sarcastic.

'Perhaps so. But I don't hate the town. It's only a clumsy effort. We haven't learned to live together yet.' (SL 314)

Such memories and conversations indicate that Paul's final departure for the town is a move to a familiar world. His successful relationship with the factory girls and employers show that, unlike Cyril, Paul has not been an observer in the city but part and parcel of its moving procession. It is the vitality and the energy of this active procession that appeals most to the passionate nature of Paul the artist. Likewise, the sense of 'togetherness' makes less unbearable for him the idea that he is 'one tiny upright speck of flesh, less than an ear of wheat lost in the field' (SL 464). In the city Paul would no longer feel alone. Like stars and sun that held 'each other in embrace' as darkness threatens to outpass them, Paul would feel safer amongst his fellow-infinitesimal humans. His quick 'walk towards the faintly humming, glowing town' is not a 'poetic' conclusion,¹⁶⁰ but a compulsion which determines the artist's survival. Paul's decision is part of his lifetime need to be held and kept, of his quest for relatedness.

Paul's final decision to walk towards the town marks a new stage in Lawrence's handling of the artist-city relationship. Paul's move to the city, however, signals no development in Lawrence's treatment of the exile theme. It is true that Paul is preoccupied with the idea of going abroad more than Cyril and Siegmund, and voices such an intention on several occasions (SL 335).¹⁶¹ Nevertheless, like them, Paul never goes beyond wishing. Each of the three artists considers exile when their personal lives are in a mess. Paul 'wanted to run, to go abroad, anything' (SL 335) when he realises the failure of his relationship with Miriam. He would express the same intention when his interest in Clara wanes considerably. 'I s'll leave Nottingham and go abroad - soon,' he tells her, but feels unable to explain what for: 'I dunno! I feel restless' (SL 396). Paul claims he cannot take this step as long as Mrs Morel is alive, but the end of the novel shows that after her death his remarks about leaving the country remain as off-hand as before. Before exile could become a priority for Paul, he has to succeed first where Cyril and Siegmund failed. Finding 'the right woman' (SL 395) - someone who

will combine in one Miriam's spirituality, Clara's passion, and Mrs Morel's understanding and determination never to give in - is this artist's main target. Paul admits that he intends to get married in the future (SL 292) to a woman with whom he could establish a normal 'give and take' relationship (SL 320).

The completion of Sons and Lovers signals a new direction in Lawrence's handling of the relationship between sexes. In the works written immediately after the third novel the male and female characters would no longer be in conflict and separate because they are different from one another. In The Rainbow and its sequel Women in Love relations and marriages succeed because no one wants to dominate or make use of the other. Characters are attracted to one another not to find kindred spirits. It is the 'otherness' of the partner that future Lawrentian figures find interesting.

Lawrence's new conception of the relationship between sexes would soon leave its impact also on his handling of the artist theme. The artist-figures Lawrence wrote about after 1913 need to be kept, to be related not less than Cyril, Siegmund and Paul. Unlike them, however, Lawrence's future artistic protagonists find comfort, fulfilment and relatedness among those who oppose and challenge them. Contradictions are indispensable for future Lawrentian artists' marriages or relationships to succeed, and antagonisms become the main source of their creative energy.

NOTES: CHAPTER FIVE

1. For Lawrence's admiration for Dickens's work - David Copperfield and Dombey and Son in particular - see Jessie Chambers, Personal Record, pp. 95-6.
2. Charles Dickens, Dombey and Son (London: Hazell, 1933), p. 142.
3. Ibid.
4. See Personal Record, p. 96.
5. Peter Coveney, The Image of Childhood: The Individual and Society: a Study of the Theme in English Literature, rev. ed. (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967), p. 241. (Hereafter cited as Image of Childhood).
6. Ibid., p. 242.
7. James Barrie, Peter Pan, 1904.
8. See Dombey and Son, p. 124.
9. See Carol Sklenicka, Lawrence and the Child, p. 44.
10. Ibid., p. 45.
11. Ibid., p. 43.
12. As late as 1919 Lawrence remarks: 'My mother never wanted me to be born' (see Lawrence's letter to Lady Cynthia Asquith, 6 March 1919, in The Letters of D. H. Lawrence, Vol. 3, October 1916 - June 1921, eds. James T. Boulton and Andrew Robertson (Cambridge, 1984), p. 333.
13. See George Neville, Memoir of Lawrence, pp. 64-5.
14. See Alastair Niven, D. H. Lawrence: The Novels, pp. 39-40; Daniel Dervin, A 'Strange Sapience': The Creative Imagination of D. H. Lawrence (Amherst: U of Massachusetts P, 1984), p. 10; Carol Sklenicka, Lawrence and the Child, p. 44.
15. To Carol Sklenicka, Paul's hair 'is surely representative of his innocence, and the drop of blood that stains it is the corruption of the unhappy marriage that obtrudes into the child's defenselessness' (see Lawrence and the Child, p. 54).
16. Julian Moynahan, Deed of Life, p. 21.
17. The passage from 'Paul Morel' is quoted in Early Years, p. 447. I have retained here the transcription practices used in the Cambridge edition of the works of D. H. Lawrence: a first deleted reading is in single pointed brackets < >; and an

addition is shown in half brackets [].

18. Personal Record, p. 192.
19. For more on Jessie Chambers's biased reading of 'Paul Morel' II see Personal Record, pp. 190-3; Helen Baron, 'Sons and Lovers: The Surviving Manuscripts from Three Drafts Dated by Paper Analysis', in Studies in Bibliography xxxviii (1985):289-328 (pp. 304, 307, 316). (Hereafter cited as 'Paper Analysis'); John Worthen, Early Years, pp. 327-8.
20. See D. H. Lawrence, The Initial 'Plot' of 'Paul Morel', m.s., College Notebook, W. H. Clarke; printed in D. H. Lawrence: The Early Years: 1885-1912, by John Worthen (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 278-9. (Hereafter cited as 'The 1910 "Plot" of SL').
21. For this information I am indebted to Helen Baron (see 'Paper Analysis', p. 301; 'Paul Morel' II, Chapter IV, 'Paul Morel's First Glimpses of Life', pp. 88-125).
22. In paying so much attention to William in the last two versions of Sons and Lovers Lawrence 'ignored' Annie and Arthur to the point that in the ultimate writing they emerge as largely inconsistent characters. Such inconsistencies have recently attracted the attention of scholars such as Helen Baron (see 'Paper Analysis', p 302), Malcolm Pittock (see 'Sons and Lovers: the Price of Betrayal', in Rethinking Lawrence, ed. Keith Brown (Milton Keynes: Open UP, 1990), pp. 120-32 (pp. 125-6, 132). (Hereafter cited as 'Price of Betrayal')), and John Worthen (see Early Years, p. 91). None of the three critics, however, relates such inconsistencies to the emergence of William as a prominent protagonist in the third and fourth versions of the book.
23. Edward Garnett, Notes on 'Paul Morel' III, m.s., New York Public Library; printed in Sons and Lovers, by D. H. Lawrence, eds. Helen Baron and Carl Baron (Cambridge, 1992), pp. xI-xli (p. xli).
24. D. H. Lawrence, 'Paul Morel' II, m.s., Bancroft Library, Berkeley. The passage is quoted in Early Years, pp. 298-9.
25. Personal Record, pp. 190-1.
26. I am indebted for this observation to John Worthen (see Early Years, p. 298).
27. See Personal Record, p. 190.
28. See Early Years, p. 298.
29. Quoted in Early Years, p. 56.
30. See Early Years, p. 299.
31. D. W. Winnicott, The Child, the Family, and the Outside World

- (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1964), p. 66. The connection between Paul's crying as a child with what Winnicott calls 'sad crying' is made by John Worthen (see Early Years, p. 76).
32. Richard Swigg, Lawrence, Hardy, and American Literature (London: Oxford UP, 1972), p. 48.
 33. I am indebted to Helen Baron for this observation (see 'Paper Analysis', p. 315).
 34. See Alastair Niven, D. H. Lawrence: The Novels, p. 45.
 35. For the close relationship of Lawrence with his elder brother Ernest see George Neville, Memoir of Lawrence, pp. 39, 64; and John Worthen, Early Years, p. 55.
 36. Helen Baron and Carl Baron, eds., Introduction, Sons and Lovers, by D. H. Lawrence (Cambridge, 1992), pp. xxi-lxxxi (p. xlix). (Hereafter cited as 'The Barons' Introduction to SL').
 37. Peter Balbert, D. H. Lawrence and the Phallic Imagination: Essays on Sexual Identity and Feminist Misreading (New York: St. Martin's, 1989), p. 25. (Hereafter cited as Phallic Imagination).
 38. Alastair Niven, D. H. Lawrence: The Novels, p. 44. For more on Lawrence's sympathy for Mr Morel see also Michael Black's Early Fiction, p. 176.
 39. Helen Baron, 'Mrs Morel Ironing', in Journal of the D. H. Lawrence Society (1984):2-12 (p. 10).
 40. The novel records several instances of Paul's 'hard-heartedness'. In Chapter V, Part I, the boy who brings the news of Mr Morel's latest accident has hardly left the Morels' when Paul resumes his painting (SL 108-9), thus irritating his mother. In Part II Paul teases Mrs Morel about Arthur's enlisting in the army (SL 218-21), and Annie's marriage (SL 285-6).
 41. Peter Balbert, Phallic Imagination, p. 24.
 42. See John Worthen, Early Years, p. 100.
 43. Paul Eggert, 'Opening up the Text: the Case of Sons and Lovers', in Rethinking Lawrence, ed. Keith Brown (Milton Keynes: Open UP, 1990), pp. 38-52 (p. 48). (Hereafter cited as 'Opening up the Text').
 44. Ibid.
 45. Carol Sklenicka, Lawrence and the Child, p. 67.
 46. Personal Record, pp. 190-1.
 47. Julian Moynahan, Deed of Life, p. 16.

48. The Times Literary Supplement, rev. of Sons and Lovers, by D. H. Lawrence 12 June 1913: 256 (Hereafter cited as TLS).
49. Ethel Colburn Mayne, rev. of Sons and Lovers, by D. H. Lawrence, Nation 12 July 1913:577-8. (Hereafter cited as Mayne's rev. of SL); repr. in Critical Heritage, pp. 69-72.
50. Hugh Walpole, rev. of Sons and Lovers, by D. H. Lawrence, Blue Review July 1913:190-3. (Hereafter cited as Walpole's rev. of SL).
51. Paul Eggert, 'Opening up the Text', p. 49.
52. Michael Bell, Language and Being, p. 38.
53. TLS, p. 256.
54. W. L. Courtney, rev. of Sons and Lovers, by D. H. Lawrence Daily Telegraph 18 June 1913:6. (Hereafter cited as Courtney's rev. of SL).
55. The second half of Sons and Lovers has been rejected by the novelist Hugh Walpole (see Walpole's rev. of SL, pp. 190-3), and has been denounced fiercely by Ethel Colburn Mayne, a writer of fiction and literary biographies (see Mayne's rev. of SL, pp. 577-8).
56. TLS, p. 256.
57. Hubert Bland, rev. of Sons and Lovers, by D. H. Lawrence New Statesman 5 July 1913:408. (Hereafter cited as Bland's rev. of SL).
58. Mayne's rev. of SL, pp. 577-8.
59. Paul Eggert, 'Opening up the Text', p. 50.
60. William Heinemann's letter to D. H. Lawrence, 1 July 1912, in Letters, i, p. 421.
61. Walter de la Mare's letter to Edward Garnett, 27 May 1913, in Letters, i, p. 423.
62. Walter de la Mare's letter to Edward Garnett, c. 1 July 1912, in Letters, i, p. 424.
63. Letter to Walter de la Mare, 10 June 1912, in Letters, i, pp. 416-7 (p. 417).
64. Letter to Edward Garnett, 3 March 1913, in Letters, i, pp. 522-3 (p. 522).
65. Letter to Edward Garnett, [1 December 1912], in Letters, i, pp. 481-2.
66. Letter to Louie Burrows, 13 March 1911, in Letters, i, pp. 237-8 (p. 237).
67. The Barons' Introduction to SL, p. xlvii.

68. Paul Eggert, 'Opening up the Text', p. 50.
69. See the 1910 'Plot' of SL, pp. 278-9.
70. Helen Baron and Carl Baron are probably the first critics who have attempted to trace the roots of the Miriam of Sons and Lovers in 'Paul Morel' I (see the Barons' Introduction to SL, pp. xxvi-xxvii).
71. For Jessie Chambers's devotion to the development of Lawrence's 'genius' see Personal Record, p. 203.
72. See John Worthen, Early Years, p. 351.
73. For Paul's and Miriam's reading and literary discussions see SL, pp. 185, 193, 234, 360.
74. Malcolm Pittock maintains that in the final version of Sons and Lovers Lawrence simply 'forgot' to represent Miriam as a schoolmistress, or to provide her with any profession! (see 'Price of Betrayal', pp. 127-8).
75. I am indebted for this observation to John Worthen (see Early Years, p. 351).
76. D. H. Lawrence, Study of Thomas Hardy and Other Essays, ed. Bruce Steele (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 125:1, 114:39.
77. Laurence Lerner, 'Lawrence and the Feminists', in D. H. Lawrence: Centenary Essays, ed. Mara Kalnins (Bristol, 1986), pp. 69-87, (p. 74). (Hereafter cited as 'Lawrence and the Feminists').
78. Adrienne E. Gavin, 'Miriam's Mirror: Reflections on the Labelling of Miriam Leivers', in D. H. Lawrence Review 24:1 Spring 1992: 27-41 (p. 33). (Hereafter cited as 'Miriam's Mirror').
79. For more on treatment of Miriam as a 'spiritual vampire' see Mark Spilka's 'Lawrence's Quarrel with Tenderness', in Critical Quarterly 9(1967):363-77; repr. in Critical Essays on D. H. Lawrence, eds. Dennis Jackson and Fleda Brown Jackson (Boston: Hall, 1988), pp. 223-37 (p. 225). (Hereafter cited as 'Quarrel with Tenderness'); and The Love Ethic of D. H. Lawrence (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1955), pp. 51, 68. (Hereafter cited as Love Ethic).
80. For more on the dangers facing an artist from a spiritual woman's deprecating of his sexuality see Colin Milton's Lawrence an Nietzsche, pp. 55, 95, 210, 224, 226.
81. John Stoll, Search for Integration, p. 65.
82. For the Clara figure's initial appearance in 'Paul Morel' II see Helen Baron, 'Paper Analysis', pp. 302-3, and John Worthen, Early Years, p. 298.

83. See the 1910 'Plot' of SL, pp. 278-9.
84. Early Years, p. 298.
85. John Worthen's view that Lawrence introduces Clara to 'revitalise' the novel (see Early Years, p. 298) is initially expressed by Michael Black, who holds that the imagined Clara is brought in to provide a way out for the less sure progress of the Second Part of the book in which Paul repeatedly breaks off the relationship with Miriam and then comes back to her (see Early Fiction, p. 166).
86. Personal Record, p. 202.
87. Letter to Louie Burrows, 13 March 1911, in Letters, i, pp. 237-8 (p. 237).
88. Lascelles Abercrombie, rev. of Sons and Lovers, by D. H. Lawrence, Academy 28 June 1913:218. (Hereafter cited as Abercrombie's rev. of SL).
89. Mayne's rev. of SL, pp. 557-8.
90. I am grateful to Helen Baron and Carl Baron for drawing my attention to the deletions and alterations Edward Garnett made in Sons and Lovers (see the Barons' Introduction to SL, p. I).
91. For more on Lawrence's intention to avoid manifest description of sex-love in Sons and Lovers see John Stoll, Search for Integration, pp. 99-100, and Julian Moynahan, Deed of Life, p. 13.
92. Abercrombie's rev. of SL, p. 218.
93. Mayne's rev. of SL, pp. 557-8.
94. Robert Lynd, rev. of Sons and Lovers, by D. H. Lawrence, Daily News and Leader 7 June 1913:4. (Hereafter cited as Lynd's rev. of SL).
95. Abercrombie's rev. of SL, p. 218.
96. Mayne's rev. of SL, pp. 557-8.
97. Peter Balbert, Phallic Imagination, p. 16.
98. Ibid., p. 21.
99. Malcolm Pittock, 'Price of Betrayal', p. 130.
100. See John Worthen, Early Years, p. 445.
101. Sybille Bedford, Aldous Huxley: A Biography, Vol. I: 1894-1939 (London: Chatto, 1973), p. 228.

102. See Frieda's section in Lawrence's letter to Edward Garnett, 7 September 1912, in Letters, i, pp. 447-9 (p. 449).
103. Quoted in Helen Baron's "Jessie Chambers' Plea for Justice to 'Miriam'", in Archiv, cxxxvii (1985):63-84; repr. Journal of the D. H. Lawrence Society iv (1987-8):7-24 (p.14). (Hereafter cited as 'Plea for Justice').
104. Ibid., p. 21.
105. Personal Record, pp. 138, 216.
106. See Frieda's section in Lawrence's letter to Edward Garnett, 7 September 1912, in Letters, i, pp. 447-9 (p. 449).
107. Frieda Lawrence, 'Not I, But the Wind...' (London: Heinemann, 1935), p. 4.
108. John Worthen, Early Years, p. 508.
109. Robert Lucas, Frieda Lawrence: The Story of Frieda von Richthofen and D. H. Lawrence, trans. Geoffrey Skelton (New York: Viking, 1974), p. ix.
110. Emile Delavenay, 'Making Another Lawrence: Frieda and the Lawrence Legend', D. H. Lawrence Review 8(1975):80-98 (p. 84).
111. Letter to Louie Burrows, 3 March 1911, in Letters, i, pp. 234-5 (p. 235).
112. Letter to Sallie Hopkin, 26 April 1911, in Letters, i, pp. 260-1 (p. 261).
113. 'Not I, But the Wind...', p. 3.
114. Frieda's words are quoted in Harry T. Moore's The Priest of Love: A Life of D. H. Lawrence, rev. ed. (London: Heinemann, 1974), p. 164. (Hereafter cited as Priest of Love).
115. 'Not I, But the Wind...', p. 3.
116. Anne Fernihough, D. H. Lawrence: Aesthetics and Ideology (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), p. 65. (Hereafter cited as Aesthetics and Ideology).
117. See John Worthen, Early Years, p. 443.
118. For Lawrence's contacts with professional psychoanalysts see Harry T. Moore, Priest of Love, p. 202.
119. For Frieda's claims that she played a considerable role in writing Sons and Lovers see in Letters, i, her sections in Lawrence's letters to Edward Garnett, [15 October 1912], pp. 461-3 (p. 462); 19 November 1912, pp. 476-9 (p. 479); and 'Not I, But the Wind...', p. 52.

120. For lukewarm and praising remarks on Frieda's impact on Sons and Lovers see Harry T. Moore, Priest of Love, p. 164, Carol Sklenicka, Lawrence and the Child, p. 65, and Anne Fernihough, Aesthetics and Ideology, p. 65.
121. In her section in Lawrence's letter to Edward Garnett of 19 November 1912 Frieda admits that she 'wrote little female bits' in 'Paul Morel' (see Letters, i, pp. 476-9 (p. 479)).
122. John Worthen, Early Years, p. 438.
123. I am indebted to John Worthen for this observation (see Early Years, p. 438).
124. I am indebted to John Worthen for this observation (see Early Years, p. 434).
125. 'Not I, But the Wind...', p. 52.
126. Letter to Edward Garnett, 7 September 1912, in Letters, i, pp. 447-9 (p. 449).
127. Personal Record, p. 204.
128. See Harry T. Moore, Priest of Love, p. 164.
129. The quotation from 'Paul Morel' appears in Helen Baron's 'Paper Analysis', p. 323.
130. See Frieda's section in Lawrence's letter to Edward Garnett, 19 November 1912, in Letters, i, pp. 476-9 (p. 479); and 'Not I, But the Wind...', p. 52.
131. Helen Baron, 'Paper Analysis', p. 323 n.37.
132. See the 1910 'Plot' of SL, p. 279.
133. Sons and Lovers has been approached as bildungsroman either in passing or at some length by Alastair Niven in D. H. Lawrence: The Novels, p. 37, and in D. H. Lawrence: The Writer and His Work (Essex: Longman, 1980), p. 34; Marko Modiano in Domestic Disharmony, p. 76; and Peter Balbert in Phallic Imagination, pp. 19-20.
134. Lynd's rev. of SL, p. 4.
135. Helen Baron, 'Paper Analysis', p. 302.
136. Carol Sklenicka, Lawrence and the Child, p. 36.
137. For Colin Milton's treatment of Paul Morel as an artistic figure see Lawrence and Nietzsche, pp. 95, 126, 140, 143, 184, 221, and for John Worthen's attention to Paul's artistry see Early Years, pp. 148-9.

138. See John Worthen, Early Years, p. 434.
139. Kate Millett, Sexual Politics (Garden City: Doubleday, 1970; repr. London: Virago, 1977), p. 248.
140. Faith Pullin, 'Lawrence's Treatment of Women in Sons and Lovers', in Lawrence and Women, ed. Anne Smith (New York: Barnes; London: Vision, 1978), p. 49. (Hereafter cited as 'Treatment of Women in SL').
141. Julian Moynahan, Deed of Life, p. 24.
142. Seymour Betsky, 'Rhythm and Theme: D. H. Lawrence's Sons and Lovers', in The Achievement of D. H. Lawrence, eds. Frederick J. Hoffman and Harry T. Moore (Norman: U of Oklahoma P, 1953), pp. 138-9.
143. John Worthen, Early Years, p. 8.
144. Personal Record, p. 106.
145. Ibid., p. 105.
146. Letter to Frederick Atkinson, 14 June 1910, in Letters, i, pp. 162-3 (p. 163).
147. Letter to Edward Garnett, 30 December 1911, in Letters, i, pp. 342-3 (p. 343).
148. For Lawrence's lack of enthusiasm about the new title Sons and Lovers see in Letters, i, his letters to Edward Garnett, [15 October 1912], pp. 461-3 (p. 462), and 30 October [-2 November] 1912, pp. 465-8 (p. 466); and to Arthur McLeod, 2 December 1912, pp. 482-4 (p. 482).
149. Letter to Edward Garnett, [15 October 1912], in Letters, i, pp. 461-3 (p. 462).
150. Frieda wanted to call 'The Sisters' - which eventually became The Rainbow and The Women in Love - 'Dies Irae: The Days of Wrath' (see Lawrence's letter to J. B. Pinker, 31 October 1916, in Letters, ii, pp. 669-70 (p. 669)).
151. See in Letters, i, Lawrence's letters to Edward Garnett of [15 October 1912], pp. 461-3 (p. 462); and of 19 November 1912, pp. 476-9 (p. 479).
152. The Barons' Introduction to SL, p. xxi.
153. Julian Moynahan, Deed of Life, pp. 17-8.
154. W. D. Snodgrass, 'A Rocking-Horse: The Symbol, the Pattern, the Way to Live', in D. H. Lawrence: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Mark Spilka (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1963), p. 117.
155. For Lawrence/Paul's 'ruthless' treatment of women see Kate Millett, Sexual Politics, p. 248 and Faith Pullin, 'Treatment of Women in SL', p. 49.

156. Ibid.
157. Letter to Edward Garnett, 19 November 1912, in Letters, i, pp. 476-9 (p. 477).
158. The calligraphy of Lawrence's letter to Edward Garnett of 19 November 1912 (see Letters, i, pp. 476-9) shows that it was written by Lawrence himself. Yet it cannot be ruled out that this piece of writing was not composed under Frieda's influence, if for the only reason that it stresses only the incestuous motive of Sons and Lovers which, as I have been trying to prove in this thesis, although it is present, yet it can by no means be considered as the main, let alone the sole theme of the book.
159. See Henry James Forman, 'With D. H. Lawrence in Sicily', in New York Times Book Review and Magazine 27 August 1922:12; repr. Nehls, ii, pp. 104-9.
160. John Stoll, Search for Integration, pp. 72, 105.
161. For more on Paul's intention to go abroad see SL, pp. 396, 433, 461.

CONCLUSION

Writing about the image of the artist in the work of a 'deeply personal' writer - as Lawrence saw himself from the start of his career¹ - one must be cautious not to read fiction as autobiography. It is true that Lawrence employed his own and other real people's life-experiences as one of the main sources of his creative work. Yet he constantly reshaped and rearranged such experiences imaginatively not so much in order to turn his own life into art but rather to highlight the theme of the identity of the artist. As Mark Kinkead-Weekes has recently pointed out, 'the quick of Lawrence's use of imagination to explore his problems lay precisely in the freedom to select, isolate and heighten certain elements, and to create literary circumstances in which their significance could be explored'.²

It could be argued that while the image of the artist in Lawrence's early fiction, particularly in his first three novels, is not necessarily autobiographical, it still remains too 'personal'. Likewise, Cyril Beardsall, Siegmund MacNair, and Paul Morel represent Lawrence's own notion of what an artist is, and what it means to be an artist; a notion with which not all of us may necessarily agree. As Michael Angelo put it, however, a work of art is an act of faith, and so arguing whether Lawrence's conception of the artist was right or wrong means that we are imposing on his beliefs and art our own judgement of what we deem correct or incorrect. Rather than approving or disapproving what Lawrence believed in and wrote about, the aim in the preceding chapters has been to find out why he took such a keen interest in the artist theme from the start of his writing career, and to trace how it evolved from 1906 to 1913.

For the last fifty years the general tendency has been to see the artist as one of us, not a strange creature inspired, but as someone who is 'just like the man next door - in fact he probably *is* the man next door'.³ Views of this nature are probably one of the reasons why we find it rather hard to sympathise with or accept readily Lawrence's notion of the artist as someone who is distinguished among others.

His conception of the artist as a special creature is indicative of the impact the nineteenth-century Romantics had on Lawrence from the start of his creative writing. It also mirrors largely the great confidence Lawrence always had in himself as a 'unique' person who was destined to be 'something', 'a bit more than ordinary',⁴ as someone who not only foresaw his people's need 'to alter, and have more sense',⁵ but was also eager to assist in bringing about their transformation.

Lawrence's notion of the artist as a potential oracle and rescuer is initially apparent in the elevated position Cyril Beardsall finds himself in from the start of The White Peacock. Only Cyril can easily perceive the inertness of both the native landscape and the characters. No other protagonist in the book shares this artist-figure's ability for abstract perception.

While the exile theme remains pivotal throughout The White Peacock, Lawrence is also apparently trying to tackle in this novel the issue of the artist's relationships with women. Cyril's relation with Emily runs parallel to his increasing alienation and departure from the valley. Yet at this stage in his writing career Lawrence is unable to make any significant headway in the handling of the artist-woman relationship. Apparently, Cyril avoids Emily because he views her as a potential possessive mother who would like to have absolute power over her husband. The novel, though, offers insufficient evidence to vindicate Cyril's decision to ignore his lover. This literary couple's relation remains sketchy to the end of the book.

The Emily figure, on the other hand, is important because it offers the earliest example thus far of Lawrence's notion of the possessive and dreaming woman. This kind of woman and her relationship with the artist take central stage in Lawrence's second novel. The husband in The Trespasser does not leave his wife for a younger and more beautiful lover, but for a woman who apparently offers the artist in him more understanding and fulfilment.

The Trespasser marks a significant breakthrough in Lawrence's handling of the artist-woman relationship. All the same, even here Lawrence is not able as yet to give a clear-cut picture of what an artist wants from a woman, nor what a woman like Helena

can or cannot offer to her artistic lover. Apparently, to Siegmund and his Doppelgänger Hampson, and for that matter to Lawrence, Helena is an epitome of a dreaming woman who aims at suppressing 'the gross and animal' in the artist. But while Helena emerges often as a dreaming woman, she is not always opposed to sex to the extent that Lawrence's future dreaming women are. The Helena figure indicates that Lawrence has not as yet worked out completely the concept of the 'dreaming woman'. Probably, Lawrence's major achievement regarding Helena is the convincing picture he draws of her possessive nature.

In the third novel Lawrence pays particular attention to the danger possessive women pose to the artist. By now, however, while possessiveness remains a common feature to all women who are close to the artist, Lawrence no longer portrays them as being both spiritual and sexual. Miriam and Clara represent the contrasting sexual and spiritual types of women. Through these two one-sided female figures Lawrence highlights more than ever before the artist's need for spiritual and sexual fulfilment; something which explains largely why in this work, but mainly in its third part, the issues themselves 'determine the artistic form'.⁶

The artist in Sons and Lovers finally frees himself from the mother, and his two lovers because he is aware more than Cyril and Siegmund of what is best for him as a creative man. Paul Morel is Lawrence's most self-conscious, and articulate artistic figure. Proud, egoistic, cunning and ruthless, Paul remains always true to himself.

Sons and Lovers marks a climax in the quest of the Lawrentian artist for self-awareness, self-fulfilment and freedom. The novel also signals an end to the tendency of Lawrence's artists of the 1906-1913 period to part with women because of their differences. In the works Lawrence wrote after 1913 the artist continues to need a woman as much as Cyril, Siegmund, and Paul do. Unlike these three predecessors, however, Lawrence's future artists would be attracted and attached to a woman not only for what they have in common but also because of her 'otherness'. The marriage of the opposites becomes probably the most conspicuous development in Lawrence's handling of the artist theme after his first three novels.

NOTES: CONCLUSION

1. Letter to Edward Garnett, 21 January 1912, in Letters, i, pp. 353-4 (p. 353).
2. Mark Kinkead-Weekes, D. H. Lawrence: Triumph to Exile (Cambridge, 1996), p. 19.
3. Al Alvarez, ed., The New Poetry (1962; rev. ed., Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966), p. 25. For more on the claim that artist's independent status must disappear, and that s/he must become either 'a spare-time amateur or an official' see George Orwell, The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters, eds. Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus, 4 vols. (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1954). Vol. 3, p. 266; and Alan Sinfield, Literature, Politics and Culture in Postwar Britain (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), pp. 47, 184.
4. Jessie Chambers, Personal Record, p. 49.
5. Letter to Arthur McLeod, [23 April 1913], in Letters, i, pp. 543-5 (p. 544).
6. Paul Eggert, 'Opening up the Text', p. 50.

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